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No 353.

JAMIE'S LETTER.

BY EDEN E. REXFORD,
Author of "Silver Threads Among the Gold."

Sing, robin, up there in the cherry,
A-swing by your wonderful nest,
Where your brown little wife is holding
Her speckled brood to her breast.
You are happy, I know, but oh, robin,
You would carol a gladder lee,
If you only could read the letter
My Jamie has written me!

Blow in your radiant beauty,
Oh, rose, in the Junetime sun!
Your heart is aflood with fragrance
From a thousand summers won!
My heart is like some shy blossom
That waited its June to blow,
With the sunshine of love to woo it,
It will bloom like a rose, I know!

Oh, wind, let me tell you a secret!
And listen, oh, sweet, red rose!
I care not if Sir Robin hears it,
And his mate in the cherry knows.
The letter my Jamie sent me,
Was full of his love for me,
And my happy heart runs over,
With its jubilant ecstasy.

Sing, robin, your merriest music!
And lift to the kiss of the sun
Your sweet, red lips, oh roses!
My summer is just begun!
For Jamie wrote that he loved me!
Do you hear? He loves only me!
And to-morrow he's coming! My lover,
My prince, and the king to be!

SURE SHOT SETH, The Boy Rifleman;

OR,
THE YOUNG PATRIOTS OF THE NORTH.

BY OLL COOMES.

AUTHOR OF "IDAHO TOM," "RED ROB," "DA-
KOTA DAN," "OLD DAN RACKBACK," ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE SPY IN THE LOG.

AN August night of the year 1862 hung over
the forests of Minnesota.

The sky was overcast with a leaden-gray mist,
and the pale moon looked feebly to earth.
The river rolled on through the purple shad-
ows, whispering low and sullenly to the stately
pines, its faithful sentinels of centuries gone.

The dreary, monotonous drone of insect wings
seemed everywhere, and now and then the hoot
of an owl boomed heavily through the night.
The breathings of reposing Nature came in
pulsing sobs, as though under her fair and mighty
bosom an aching, throbbing heart lay, conscious
of the black cloud gathering on the horizon.

Through the woods bordering on the Minne-
sota river, and contiguous to the Yellowstone
Agency, a figure was gliding noiselessly along—
a human figure—that of a boy with bright blue
eyes and strong, prepossessing features. He was
light in form and lithe of limb, and darted on-
ward through the gloom as though it were his
own element. He seemed perfectly familiar
with his course, and dodged in and out of the
tangled mazes of the grim old wood, and along
the sinuous windings of the valleys, like a hound
upon the trail.

At length he drew up in the forest under some
stately pines, where the darkness seemed to have
been born of infinity. Dropping the butt of his
rifle to the ground, Sure Shot Seth, the Boy
Rifleman and Spy, listened.

"To-whit-to-whoo-hoo-oo-oo!" rung from the
tree overhead.

Seth shook his head thoughtfully.
"I never like to hear an owl hoot," he said to
himself, "for it's a bad sign."

He sat down on a hollow log, and after the
owl's cry came a deep and profound silence—a
silence that became painful and foreboding to the
youth. But it lasted only a few minutes when
that droning hum of nature was resumed.

Sure Shot Seth breathed easier. He whistled
softly to himself.

A frog croaked on the margin of the river.
A cricket chirped shrilly in the hollow log.
The wind whispered softly among the stately
pines.

A night-hawk screamed above the forest, then
with that peculiar hollow boom of his wings, shot
up into the sky.

Again the old owl overhead sent forth his
hoarse notes quivering upon the air; and the
sound was immediately followed by a scrambling
among the branches, as upon heavy wing
the bird went lumbering away through the night.

Then a silence profound as the grave followed.
"Ah," mused Seth, "that frightened cry and
flight of the owl, and this terrible silence have a
meaning."

He started to his feet as he spoke. He had
been trained in the lore of the woods and night,
and could read the sounds of each like an open
book, and interpret their meaning and portents.
There was a difference in the sound of a stealthy
movement and one that was not, though both
may have been equally loud. But it took an in-
stinct trained in the school of practical experi-
ence to discriminate between them. This our
fearless young hero possessed. The silence that
succeeded the warning cry of that cowardly old
sentinel of the night, the owl, convinced him
that danger was approaching. He bent his head
and listened intently.

Off in the direction of the river he heard the
heavy tread of feet.

"They're comin', sure as death!" the youth
said to himself, then he dropped to the ground
and crept into the hollow log upon which he had
been seated.

The footsteps approached and paused under
the great pines within a few feet of the log.
The boy knew they were the steps of booted feet,
and had some idea to whom they belonged. He
applied his eye to a knot-hole in his retreat, and
peered out, but all was wrapped in Egyptian
gloom. He pressed his ear to the orifice and lis-
tened. To and fro beneath the branching trees
he heard the unknown pacing with restless im-
patience.

Presently he heard voices in conversation, and
then a faint beam of light streamed into the log.
He applied his eyes to the hole again, and, in

SURE SHOT SETH:



THE BOY RIFLEMAN. BY OLL COOMES.

Dropping the butt of his rifle to the ground, Sure Shot Seth, the Boy Rifleman and Spy, listened.

the light of a pocket-lantern, saw four persons
standing, and looking like Titan figures in the
gloom.

Three of them Seth recognized as the notorious
Sioux chiefs, Little Crow, Inkpaduta, and Little
Priest. The fourth was a white man, whose
long hair, broad-brimmed hat, peculiar garb,
and general appearance were characteristic of
no other class of men than the wealthy planters
of the Southern States.

"So you have kept your appointment," said

the white man, raising the lantern and scanning
each face before him with knitted brows.

"Little Crow is a great chief," said the re-
doubtable chief himself, "and never breaks his
word with his friends."

The other two answered in the same words.
"I am glad to hear this, chiefs, for it gives me
greater strength," replied the white man. "I
have come from the sunny land of the South to
confer with my red brothers; are they ready to
listen?—are there no enemies' ears near us?"

"The trees have ears, and the wind sometimes
tells secrets," answered Little Crow.

"Then you do not deem this a safe place to
consult?"

"No; the night-jar screamed with affright,
and shot into the sky when he passed near here.
He is the spirit that warns the red-man when
darkness hides dangers from his eyes. There
are safer places than this to talk," replied the
chief.

"Let my red brother select the safest place,

that the ears of our enemies may not hear what
we say," said the white man.

"A brave waits by the river-side to take us in
his canoe whither we desire to go. Let us seek
the solitude and well-guarded shores of the
island in the river below. There can we talk in
safety, for no enemy's ear can cross the water."

"It is well, great chief," answered the white
plotter.

Disappointment clouded the face of the youth
in the log as he heard the four emissaries of evil
moving away. But his quick brain soon sug-
gested a new course of action, and, creeping
from the log, he rose to his feet and glided away
through the darkness, going in the direction of
the river, but keeping wide of the four enemies.
He reached the bank much in advance of
them. Then he stole softly down the river until
he came in sight of the Indian and canoe spoken
of by Little Crow.

The warrior sat in the boat with his blanket
drawn over his head. A rifle lay on the thwart
at his side.

The prow of the canoe lay partly upon the
beach.

The pale moon-beams, struggling downward
through the darkness and mist, revealed all to
the eyes of the young spy, as he crouched in the
shadows near.

The keen ear of the savage boatman was on
the alert. It detected a slight sound in the shrub-
bery. He started from his seat and fixed his
eyes on the bushes before him. Then followed a
"whirr," a dull, sudden blow; a groan; the
rush of feet; a splash in the water; the dip of a
paddle, and the prow of a boat cleaving the wa-
ters.

The moon hid her face behind a cloud as if
with shame; while the river flowed on as merrily
as though its waters had not been stained with
human blood.

CHAPTER II.

THE LONE ISLAND CONFERENCE.

SLOWLY toward the river Little Crow and
his three companions made their way.

The moccasined feet of the savages trod as
lightly as a panther's; but the tramp of the
white man gave ample notice of his approach.
The red-skins glided under and around the brush
that disputed their way, but, like an ox, their
companion crashed his way through, much to
their annoyance.

Finally they reached the river-bank a few rods
above the canoe.

The moon uncovered her face and looked to
earth once more.

The dip of a paddle arrested the Indians' ears.
Out upon the river Little Crow saw his boat-
man seated in the canoe, toying with the paddle.
His head and shoulders were covered with his
red and blue blanket.

The chief called to him. He headed the canoe
ashore. As the prow touched upon the beach
Little Crow courteously bade his white friend
enter it.

The white man stepped into the craft, ad-
vanced and seated himself.

The boat was a long, slender affair, made of a
log. The paddler occupied the stern; the white
man a seat next, Little Crow third, and Inkpa-
duta the prow.

"Let Serleque head for the island below," said
Little Crow, in a low tone.

Without a word the paddle dipped, the boat
backed out from the shore, swung its long prow
around, and then under the skillful management
of Serleque, glided away down the stream.

Silence sealed the lips of the party. The white
man gazed around him with a wild look of admi-
ration upon his face. The moonbeams strug-
gling through the white mist rendered objects
weird and somber. The dark woods on either
side rose up like the black walls of a mountain
pass. Now and then a night-jar screamed over-
head. The rolling waters surged and gurgled
under and around them.

Bright flashed the dripping paddle in the moon-
beams—light was its fall in the placid waters.

Swiftly onward through the waves glided the
craft. In a few minutes more the island was
reached. Inkpaduta, followed by Little Priest,
Little Crow and the white man, landed. The
boatman swung his boat alongside the little sand-
bar, laid down his paddle and drew his blanket
closer around his head.

The island was not over a rod in width by two
in length. It was a barren sand-bar, yet well
guarded by the waves on either side.

Little Crow spread his blanket upon the ground
and invited the white man to be seated upon it.

Then the chief sat down opposite him, while the
other two chiefs sat down one upon the right and
one upon the left.

"Let our white brother speak, for we are now
safe," said Little Crow.

The white man at once opened the conference;
he represented himself as an agent of the Southern
Confederacy, then waging war against the Union.
He claimed that he had been sent North to effect
terms of compromise with the Sioux under Little
Crow, and enlist their aid in battling their ene-
mies, promising them a vast tract of territory in
case victory crowned their arms. The chiefs lis-
tened closely to the propositions of the Southern
agent, and after the latter had concluded, Little
Crow arose and delivered a warm and eloquent
speech. He set forth the wrongs they had suffered
at the hands of the government, and expressed
a belief that their grievances would justify
them in taking up arms. He did not come to a
final decision, however, until Inkpaduta and Lit-
tle Priest had expressed themselves on the sub-
ject. When they had, and he found they favor-
ed the agent's views, the great Sioux chief at
once entered into an article of agreement with the
agent to assist them in their battle against the
Union. Even the very day and hour upon which
the Indian massacre, so prominent on the pages
of history, was to begin, were agreed upon by
the chiefs and the agent before the conference
ended. Altogether, an hour was consumed by
these four arch-plotters, and finally they rose to
depart. As they turned toward the boat, a cry
of surprise burst from their lips. The boat had
left the island and was half-way across to the
shore.

Little Crow called to his boatman, but the lat-
ter made no reply. He pushed on and soon en-
tered the border of shadows along the shore.

Then he permitted the mantle that enveloped
his head and shoulders to fall to his feet, while a
low, silent peal of laughter escaped his lips.

The boatman was Sure Shot Seth, the Boy Spy,
not the Indian, as Little Crow believed.

From his covert in the woods had Seth hurled

a stone and stricken the Indian boatman down. Then he tossed the body overboard, enveloped himself in the savage's blanket, turned the boat away from the scene of the tragedy and paddled along the shore up-stream until hailed by the chief coming down. And in this manner, the young spy possessed himself of the secret plot so soon to deluge the land in blood.

CHAPTER III.
THE DEATH TUSSELE.

SURE SHOT SETH turned and glanced back toward the island. He could see the four forms upon it, and hear the chief calling to Serleque, his boatman. Taking up his rifle from its concealment under the seat, he examined its priming, and was about to try a shot at one of the plotters when a sound in the water arrested his attention.

He gazed downward and to his horror beheld a human face peering up at him from the side of the boat. It was an Indian's face—the face of Serleque, the boatman! He had recovered from the blow he had received at the hands of the young spy, and was there to seek revenge.

He stood in the water to his waist, and the instant his eyes met those of his foe, he threw up his hands and seized hold of the boat.

Seth saw, at a glance, that the savage had an advantage to begin with; and the first thing the youth did was to place his finger to his lips and utter a shrill, piercing whistle that fairly started the savage as its intonations quivered through the air.

Instantly, almost, it was answered in a similar manner from back among the hills, and then the savage knew that the young pale-face had friends near. But, not to be thwarted in his plans of vengeance, he rocked the canoe violently and pitched Seth out into the water. Then the two grappled in a deadly struggle—the red-skin and the white—the man and the boy. The former uttered a yell of savage fury, the latter a shout of defiance.

Although he was weak from recent loss of blood, the savage had no idea but that he could easily vanquish his youthful enemy; but the moment they grappled he found he had reckoned without his host, for the boy not only was possessed of wonderful strength, but the agility of a panther.

The red-skin had no weapons save those that nature gave him. Seth, having deprived him of his knife and hatchet at the time of throwing him overboard, and his young adversary was no better provided, owing to the suddenness in which the conflict had been brought about; consequently the fight was confined to skill, strength and endurance. Seth made one or two attempts to draw his knife, and finally succeeded, but before he could use it, he was forced into such a position that he was compelled to drop it. This left him no recourse save in his skill and power.

Unfortunately for the youth the course of action gravitated toward the center of the river, which fact gave the enemy another advantage in consequence of his height and the depth of the water. But brave, desperate and determined, the lad struggled manfully, heaving, kicking, giving the savage all he wanted to do. Their flying arms and feet beat and churned the water to a foam around them, as in rapid evolutions they whirled and spun to and fro in every direction. At times they would sink from view, the water boiling and surging over them, then pop up perhaps a rod from where they sunk, puffing and blowing with sheer exhaustion. Now and then they would cease their struggle for a moment to rest; but never relinquishing the hold upon each other.

During one of those lulls in the conflict, half a dozen shadowy figures glided from the woods, and pausing on the shore glanced up and down the river. Then a voice called:

"Seth! Seth! where are you?"

"Here in a—"

The rest of the sentence was lost in the savage's yell and the renewal of the conflict.

"Boys," cried one of the party upon the shore, "Sure Shot is in peril!"

"Yes! Yes!" responded the others.

"Beaver, Beaver!" exclaimed the first speaker, "that is your element!"

The lad addressed as Beaver uttered the peculiar cry of the fur-bearing animal of that name; then, divesting himself of his outer clothing, he plunged into the water and struck out toward the struggling foes.

By this time Seth and the Indian had drifted out into the middle of the river, where the current was swift and strong. The elements were enemy that was no respecter of persons, and not only proved a great annoyance to the combatants, but threatened the lives of both, for they were under water a good portion of the time.

Beaver swam rapidly and with as much ease apparently as the water was his home.

When within a few rods of Seth and his antagonist when they rose to the surface from a long submersion, and to encourage his friend, he shouted:

"Brace up, Sure Shot; brace up, for I'm coming," and he ended with the sharp, piercing cry of the animal after which he had been named.

For a few moments they struggled in the swiftest part of the current; then spun rapidly across to the opposite shore, and disappeared among the hanging network of roots, laid bare by the wash of the waves. The Beaver knew they were out of the water by the sounds; but they were in blinding darkness. However, he was about to follow to the scene of conflict when he saw a dozen savage forms appear on the bank just over the combatants, and he was compelled to change his mind. He remained perfectly still on the waves and watched. They walked to the edge of the bank and looked over, but not seeing the foe, one of them dropped himself down into the river and crept under the bank to his friend's assistance.

The next moment a cry of agony issued from under the bank; then all became still.

The battle was ended, but who had been the victor?

The Beaver, slowly drifting down the river unseen by the savages, held his breath in suspense.

The next moment a figure crept out from under the bank, and climbing up into the moonlight, brandished aloft a human scalp, at the same time uttering a fierce, triumphant war-whoop.

CHAPTER IV.
THE WRONG SCALP AND THE BOY BRIGADE.

THE BEAVER drifted slowly down the river beyond danger, then sought the shore and his companions.

"Boys," he said, sad and heavy-hearted, "our gallant young leader is gone. The accursed savages were too much for him. Poor Seth! his scalp is the first of the long-threatened troubles."

A groan of the deepest anguish was wrung from the lips of each of the little band of youths—followers of Sure Shot Seth. Dearly they loved their young leader, and his death fell heavily upon their young hearts. But, all that was now left for them to do was to search out the body, give it a respectful burial, and go on with sad and heavy hearts with the duties of life assigned them.

They held a short consultation in the edge of the woods among the shadows; and as the Indians had left the opposite shore, they concluded to embark in the canoe, that lay on the beach before them, in quest of Seth's body. But at this very moment the Indians came back, terribly excited, on the opposite shore, and at the same instant the boys discovered that a large party was also approaching on their side of the river from above.

"Scatter, boys!" exclaimed one of the party, and the next moment all disappeared like a shadow before a burst of sunshine.

A savage yell rung through the forest—a yell, the like of which had not been heard for a long time in that region.

It was a blood-curdling war-whoop! Away through the forest like hounds glided the shadowy forms of the savages, their treacherous hearts thirsting for human blood.

Here and there, every boy taking care of himself, glided the followers of Sure Shot Seth. With the silence of panthers they crept among the bushes, dodged around the trees and rocks,

and stole onward through the woods and darkness.

Suddenly the sharp bark of a fox broke upon the night. One of the fleeing youths started as though a bullet had whistled past his ears. He stopped, bent his head and listened. Again the barking of the fox broke upon his ears.

He moved briskly, yet with silence, keeping the one course in "bee-line." But had gone nearly a hundred yards when a low voice hailed him:

"Hullo; is it you, Reynard?"

"Great heavens!" was the excited answer; "do my ears deceive me? or do I hear the voice of Sure Shot Seth?"

"I am here, Reynard," was the response, and Sure Shot Seth stepped from a cluster of bushes and confronted his friend.

"Well, by the Lord Harry!" exclaimed Reynard, "there's a big mistake somewhere. Why, Seth, you mourned you as dead. That scalp flourished a scalp aloft when he came from under the bank and uttered a triumphant scalp-cry."

"I know he did, the deluded fool; but the fact is, he took the scalp of a friend. He succeeded in getting his knife out just as I discovered that a second red-skin had appeared on the scene, and by a sudden movement I brought my enemy into such a position as to receive the knife of his friend in his heart. The savage knew not still that it was me, and tearing off his scalp, rushed out and climbed up the bank in great glee with a comrade's scalp, leaving me to make my way out at leisure. But are the other boys about, Reynard?"

"Yes; they are scattered through the woods, and not a few red-skins are after them. But, Seth, what did you discover to-night? Were the chiefs in council with that Southern agent?"

"Yes; and I discovered all I wanted to—that the red-skins have dug up a hatchet, a few nails, the Yellow Medicine Agency, Fort Ridgely, New Ulm and the Lower Agency are all marked for destruction. The good settlers of these places must be put upon their guard at once; and so I will call the brigade, and then turn our faces in that direction. Whippowill! whippowill!"

The last two words whistled from his lips in an exact imitation of that night-bird, whose peculiar song seems very plainly to articulate the syllables which compose its own name. A moment later a similar answer was given, and still a few moments later, a figure emerged from the shadows into the little opening where Seth and Reynard stood in waiting.

"Ay, friend Whippowill!" cried Seth, extending his hand.

"Blessed Virgin!" exclaimed the youth in the Celtic brogue, "and, beaded, I'm glad to mate ye, Seth, me b'y."

The three soon relapsed into silence; then Seth uttered a cry like that of a beaver, and was soon answered in a similar way by the others.

Minutes afterward, the lad, Beaver, who had swam to Seth's assistance, joined the group, beside himself with joy.

Then Seth sent forth the hoot of an owl, the hoot of a wolf, and the scream of a panther, and in answer to the calls, three more youths made their appearance, and joined the group amid the wildest rejoicing.

And then and there in that wildwood opening was assembled seven youths, each crying as wildly from each other as nature could make them; yet joined together as if bound by all the ties of a sacred brotherhood. By profession they were trappers, and were known as the Boy Brigade.

Each represented some different nationality, or peculiarity. There was an Irish, German, African, and Indian youth in the party, the others being Americans. All had been reared in the woods, and amid the wild dangers of the border. As a party, they were as one; but individually made them as different in tastes and notions as seven persons could well be. While one liked to trap the beaver, another would rather hunt the fox, or the wolf, or the deer. And it was the same way with the sounds they heard. While one loved to hear the plaintive song of the whippowill, another found more pleasure in the ringing hoot of an owl. Thus, by their different pursuits and respective eccentricities, had each come into possession of a sobriquet by which he was known to the band.

Seth March, the leader of this Boy Brigade, was called Sure Shot, in consequence of his unerring marksmanship.

Justin Gray was the Beaver. He made that animal a special object in hunting and trapping.

Teddy O'Rook loved the song of the whippowill, and the name of that bird was given him.

Baldwin Judd became Reynard, the fox, after having caught a number of those animals.

Tim Tricks, the African youth, being cock, became Black Fan.

The Owl was the big-eyed, round-faced German lad.

Hooseah, the Indian boy, answered to the name of Le Subtle Wolf. The name was not given him because he had any particular love for that animal, but because his movements were as sly and cunning in "bagging" game as the wolf's in taking prey. The glossy skin of a wolf was part of his dress.

These names and their emblems were but boyish whims; yet all had become familiar in the local history of Minnesota; for the Boy Brigade was an organization of its kind unsurpassed even by men of age and experience. The oldest of the party was nineteen, the youngest sixteen.

Sure Shot Seth, their leader, was a boy, yet yet possessed all the developments of perfect manhood. As a trapper, he had no peer; and it was with no feeling of envy or reluctance that he was chosen leader of the little band of boys, who, early thrown upon their own resources, chose the exciting, adventurous calling of the trapper. For two years their business had been one of indisputable profit and pleasure, but now the threatened Indian war would put an end to it; but they accepted all in a spirit of true heroism, and decided to stand by those who had stood by them in days gone by.

Their mission for the night having ended, the Boy Brigade bent their steps southward.

Rapidly, and yet silently, they made their way through the forest. The little band of five miles was traversed, until finally they drew up in front of a long, low, double cabin built of logs, and standing in the heart of a deep, dense wilderness of mighty pines. It was the home of the Brigade; and here, inside and out, was evidence of no little culture and refinement.

The odor that pervaded the atmosphere was not that of the wildwoods alone; but the mingled fragrance of wild flowers filled the air. The cabin was overrun with honey-suckles and morning-glories, and a dozen other flowers, all carefully cultivated by the boys, contributed their sweetness to that delicate sense of refinement so seldom found among the rude children of the border. The cabin door was approached through a long, shady arched of wild cucumber vines, where the hot days of summer were passed on the grass-plot beneath the sylvan shade.

The little band filed down this avenue of green, fragrant verdure, and paused before the door. Seth raised the latch, pushed open the door, and entered. His companions followed him across the threshold. All was gloom in the cabin, but, halting in the center of the room, Seth sniffed the air, then exclaimed:

"Boys, what do you smell?"

"Tobacco, by the Holy Virgin!" exclaimed the Whippowill, and all repeated his answer.

"That's it," answered Seth, "and as none of us ever use the weed, some stranger has been here smoking. Quite a liberty to take in other people's house."

A candle was at once lit, and as its light dispelled the gloom, the boys glanced hastily about them to see if the intruder had taken liberties with their cabin. But all was as they had left it.

The cabin was divided into two rooms by a partition of logs, and the one the boys first entered was used as a kind of sitting-room. The walls were hung with fancifully-wrought robes and furs, and adorned with the stuffed skins of

beautiful birds and small animals. Over each door in the branches of an ivy vine, and among which were coiled monstrous spotted serpents. On a table in one corner was a number of time-worn books—books of the very best kind for the young mind; and, in addition to this source of mental culture and pastime, a violin and harp hung upon the wall.

The young trappers set aside their weapons, and seating themselves, entered into conversation. The conference, to which Seth had been an auditor, formed the general topic of discussion. That Indian war was inevitable, they had not a doubt; and as it would be impossible for them to continue trapping, they decided to gather in their traps, dispose of their stock on hand, and vacate the Hermit Hut, as the place was called, and take up arms against the savage.

At least this was the decision of most of the party, a few evading a direct answer as to their future course. Seth noticed this hesitation with no little surprise, but said nothing. He resolved to let the matter rest until morning, then insist for direct answer from all.

"Boys!" said Seth, after they had discussed the different topics of interest, "this is probably the last night we will be here, and so let us have some music, and a final merry-making."

All acquiesced, and the Indian lad, Le Subtle Wolf, having been placed on guard outside, Tom Trick took down the fiddle and Sure Shot Seth the harp.

The first named led off with a sprightly air, and when Seth struck up the cabin fairly trembled under the melodious strains of music. The Whippowill became inspired by the ravishing notes, and, springing to his feet, executed a dance that greatly increased the interest of the moment.

"Good for the wild Irishman," exclaimed his companions, when, with a sudden movement, he turned a summersault and came up on a seat at the opposite side of the room.

"Och, and a broth av a b'y was me aged granddadd on a jig; and begorra the gift came up through the roof of the house, and O'Rooks with various improvements. But, give us a march, b'ys, somethin' to rouse the blood that fit at Bunker's Hill—somethin' military—ay, some martial moosic, that's the jigger."

Tim Tricks and Seth were both fine musicians, and the music of the Whippowill's request, struck up the "Grand Russian March," much to the delight of their auditors.

The music swelled out in enchanting melody, and with its varying notes, the blood of the listeners glowed, and the veins in sympathy with the soul-stirring strains.

The scene was one seldom met with under similar circumstances. In the flickering, changing light dancing over the walls, the dead birds and animals that ornamented the humble home of the trappers seemed to acquire with life and ready to start from their perch, enchanted by the music. The youthful faces of the lads glowed with the emotions stirred within their breasts, and their senses seemed floating away upon the rushing winds of the music.

And in the midst of all, while every mind was diverted from the cares of the outside world, and absorbed in the sweet melody of music, a dark body suddenly dropped from above in the middle of the floor with a dull thud and something bright upon it glinted in the light.

The music ceased, and the boys started to their feet with an involuntary exclamation of horror.

In the room before them stood a powerful savage, his head shaven, his face in var paint, and wreathed in a sinister smile of diabolical triumph.

There was no loft in the room, and glancing upward, the boys saw an opening had been made in the roof during the musical entertainment, and before they had time to act, a second savage swung himself down into the room and confronted the young hunters. He was immediately followed by a third, a fourth, and so on, until six powerful warriors stood in the middle of the house, facing the Boy Brigade, with their hands upon their weapons, a devilish smile of triumph upon their faces, and a murderous intent in their hearts.

(To be continued.)

THE CHILD AND LILY.
BY L. C. GREENWOOD.

A little child reached forth her hand
To kiss a fragile lily.
As tall as she, as pure, as bland,
Untouched by weather chill.

This beautiful plant was her delight
Throughout the summer hours,
And from its cups she drew of sight
She shook in silver showers.

The fairest bloom at last must fade;
Each dream must have an ending;
And so that lily was laid,
And with the dust was blending.

The child came to its favorite spot
To give its friend a greeting;
Alas! no more it was her lot
To share so fond a meeting.

Her large bright eyes with tears were filled,
And the drops were falling;
In vain her pleading voice was stilled
As she was for it calling.

Ere many days she seemed to fade
Just as her flower-friend perished;
And on the grave where she was laid
Was placed the flower she cherished.

And in each spring its bulb sends up
A stem with snow-white blossom—
That weeps their dew from every cup
O'er that pure infant bosom.

Perhaps o'er Heaven's parapet
The child's spirit is leaning;
And gazing on that lily yet
Reflects its holy meaning.

BIG GEORGE.
The Giant of the Gulch:

OR,
THE FIVE OUTLAW BROTHERS.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "LITTLE VOLCANO," "THE BOY MINER," "OLD TULL'S-EYE," "PACIFIC PETE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIV.
BIG GEORGE STIRRED UP.

A LOW, taunting laugh broke from the ruby lips of the Spanish woman, a look of bitter scorn in her black eyes as the vigilantes followed Bart Noble's lead down the valley.

"The blind fools! And they would boast of being men—so wise and foresighted—ha! ha!"

But time was precious, and she was too wise a woman to spend many minutes over the success of her use while there yet remained so much to be done. A last glance toward the retreating horsemen, then she raised a tiny ivory whistle to her lips and sounded a sharp, thrilling call, which speedily brought the Mexican called Leon to her side. To him she spoke rapidly.

"Go bid the slaves and workmen to hasten hither, with their tools—axes, picks and crow. Make haste!"

Leon darted away upon his errand, and she followed him with rapid step as far as the moss-covered stump at which the blue-jacketed Mexican had been so terribly flogged. He was still crouching there as they had left him, but at the sound of her footstep, he raised his head and a bright, eager smile lighted up his pinched face.

"My poor Florio!" she murmured, softly, laying one hand upon his head. "It was terrible—frivolous cruelty!"

"I don't mind it—I can laugh at it now, Madam Clarina. As long as you were near, and I could see your face, I felt not the lash. They might have killed me, but I would never have uttered a word."

"I wish I could have spared you the torture, Florio—but there was no other way. Sometime I will repay you—until then, you have my heart's sincerest thanks. I shall not forget your fidelity, and—ah! cruel that I am!" she exclaimed, as an involuntary shudder agitated the Mexican's frame as a gust of wind caused the jacket's sleeve with its heavy golden button to strike against his raw back. "I am talking here, while you are suffering, your wounds unhealed for—"

"If you would please call old Dinah—"

"The great black cow—with her clumsy hands—no! In my cause you suffer; and the least I can do—wait one moment, my friend,"

Madam Clarina had calculated closely. She turned aside, soon after returning, bearing soft linen clothes and a jar of ointment.

"Not you, madam?" faltered Florio, as she gently removed the garments from his lacerated back.

"Yes, I, my friend and brother," Clarina replied, paying no heed to the crowd of swarthy, dirty miners who drew near under the lead of Leon. "My lips bade you suffer; my hands shall do what they can to make amends."

Doubtless the reader has suspected the truth. Believing that the vigilantes were in reality searching for Big George and his brothers, and knowing that if so, they would not be easily gotten out of the gulch, Clarina determined on a bold ruse, knowing that she could depend upon Florio to the last drop of his heart's blood. The ruse was cunningly conceived and admirably carried out. She stole away, knowing that her absence would be discovered and she speedily followed. In the first few moments she gave Florio his true instructions, and had completed them when she saw Bart Noble stealing toward them. Her after words were spoken to mislead him. Florio chose a point of the wall where he must necessarily be discovered. Then came the hardest part. A premature confession might ruin all. The keen-witted diggers might "smell a mice."

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he succeeded in disposing of the claim at his own figures. Great was his exultation, loud his boasting for a few days; but then the laugh changed sides. The buyers set to steady work, and within the week developed one of the richest "strikes" in the vicinity, clearing from six to eight ounces of gold per day. Cursing his folly, Gin Cocktail tried hard to go back of his bargain, but in vain. He, himself, had caused the papers to be drawn up so as to leave not a loophole for the escape of his supposed "sardines," and bitterly enough he regretted it now. But he could do nothing.

Gin Cocktail kept close to his covert, only stealing out once to "confiscate" some bacon and hard tack from the stock of a devotee of the drama, whom he felt confident would beat the Temple. Succeeding in this, and provided with a jug full of water, he bore his enforced confinement as well as could be expected.

From this refuge he overheard the disturbance at the Temple, the running fight maintained by Red Pepper, and the wild excitement that followed. In the gray light of dawn he saw the vigilantes, under leadership of Bart Noble, ride rapidly away in the direction of Diamond Gulch. As the day progressed, he saw that the town was almost completely deserted, and as his wounds and bruises tingled under the noonday glare, a bold plan gradually shaped itself in his mind. The cabin of the Kendalls lay to his left, not a quarter of a mile distant, alone, since the nearest building was hundreds of yards away.

"I'll do it or bust!" he muttered, a wicked devil in his eye. "He hasn't been to the spess office for months. They've bin makin' big wages—an' it's mine by good rights, any way. He went 'long o' them fellers, most likely. She'll be alone—'twon't be a hard job. Ef I kin only git my hands on the gold—I'll soon settle her!" They won't nobody 'spicion me. They think I pucked, hot foot. They'll lay it to some o' those dirty greasers. Yes, I kin do it—an' I will, too!"

Lying upon his stomach—a sitting posture was not a favorite with Gin Cocktail, just then—his eyes fixed upon the lone cabin, the hummer carefully formed his diabolical plot. He believed its execution would be easy, and accompanied by little real danger. If Sneaky had gone, as he firmly believed, since he could see that no one was working at the claim—then there was only the girl to deal with. And the devilish light that filled his eyes whenever he caught a glimpse of her light, graceful form—now clad in the garments suitable for her sex—told plainly enough how little mercy she need expect at his hands.

A dread lest the vigilantes should return and thus frustrate his plans, caused Gin Cocktail to leave his covert earlier than he would otherwise have dared. The men had scarce disappeared an hour when he stole cautiously down the hill toward the lone cabin. A burning longing for revenge, together with the hope of making a rich haul of gold, deadened his pains, and the hummer betrayed no stiffness nor debility as he neared the shanty.

Creeping forward, keeping in the darkest shade, he gained the cabin wall undiscovered. All was silent within. There were no lights burning. Evidently Josie had gone to bed, just what he had calculated upon. He cautiously tried the door, then the one wooden-shuttered window; but each and all were fastened from within.

A grating curse told that he had not counted upon this, still, at the same time, it convinced him that Josie was alone within the cabin. He knew that Sneaky's bunk lay directly beneath the window, which was usually left ajar, to admit the cool, fresh air.

"Jest my darned crooked luck!" snarled the hummer, spitefully. "Wa-al, ef I can't git the dust, I'll hev my revinge, anyhow, ef I die for't!"

The cabin was a frail one, built of pine and cedar poles, the interstices being filled with moss and dried grass, the whole thatched with layers of bark for shingles. Beneath the sultry sun, these materials had become dry as tinder, so inflammable that a spark would be enough to insure its destruction.

None knew this better than Gin Cocktail, since he had occupied the cabin for several weeks. And, guided by this knowledge, he lost no time in carrying out his devilish project. Gathering an armful of dried grass and leaves, he fastened with twigs and pine-knots, he built four separate piles, one at each side of the cabin, then striking a match he ignited a wisp of hay, running rapidly from one pile to another until the four were blazing freely. Then, with revolver in hand, he crouched down in a clump of bushes, some twenty yards from the cabin. From this covert he could command the window and one of the doors. At both of the latter he had started fires, and already he could see that the growing flames had fastened upon the pitch-pine slabs.

As started in a previous chapter, the cabin was situated in a narrow valley, and a bend in the hollow shut off all view of the town. Thus Gin Cocktail had little cause to fear interruption from that direction, at least until the increasing glow should awaken suspicion.

Eagerly he awaited the result, his eyes glowing, his tongue licking his dry, parched lips, his skinny face fairly hideous with a Satanic gleam. He could see that the cabin was fairly aflame, the pitch-pine poles burning furiously. The moss chinking dropped out in blazing flakes. The forked tongues of fire were reaching far into the interior. And then his gaze concentrated upon the window, as he saw that the door was a blazing furnace through which no living thing could pass.

"Ha! ha! now she feels it!" he laughed, as a half-stifled shriek came from within the cabin. "Now it touches her—now it's spollin' her baby face! Ha! h—!" he grated, fiercely, "she'll git away, arter all!"

He heard a rattling crash within, and then the wooden shutter was flung open, with a jar. Through the flame-tinted smoke a pale, terrified face appeared at the opening. It was that of Josie Kendall.

The assassin knew that she would escape his devilish snare, unless speedily prevented. The opening was rapidly large enough to permit her crawling out, and at this side of the building the flames were fiercest by the door. Instantly his resolve was taken. He had already dared too much to falter now, and, rising up in his covert, he raised his revolver, crying aloud:

"Go back—I'll blow yer brains out of ye don't go back!"

Josie saw the threatening figure, heard the menacing words, but, instead of obeying, she struggled still further through the window, uttering a shrill, piercing cry for help.

With another curse, the assassin raised his pistol and fired. But the bullet sped wide of its intended victim.

The maiden's cry for aid was not unheeded. A figure was already hastening to her rescue, and was close behind Gin Cocktail when he uttered his fierce threat. Rising into the air, the figure leaped forward, striking heavily against the murderer, hurling him to the ground with stunning force, just as his pistol exploded.

As though under the same impulse the leap was repeated, and then the rescuer darted on to the cabin, just in time to catch the half-senseless maiden in his arms.

"Thank God! darling, was in time!" he cried, pressing his lips to hers, as he drew his precious burden away from the intense heat. "But am I—you are not injured?" he added, fearfully, as he received no reply.

At this moment a horseman galloped up, and leaping to the ground, confronted him, with drawn pistol.

"You here, Bush! what does all this mean?" cried Little Cassino, for he it was who last appeared.

"It means murder—a man was trying to shoot her as I came up—yonder helies," hastily replied the rescuer.

"I saw the light and hastened up, but you were too quick for me. A dying man, too! Turned doctor—you were trying to restore her with yer breath, wasn't you?" with a hard, unnatural laugh.

"I have known her for months, doctor," quietly replied Bush—the young miner whom we saw lying wounded at the "Mint." "Never mind how I found out, but I knew who 'Soft Tommy' was all along, and she has promised to be my wife."

"I'm glad to hear it, Tipton," was the warm reply. "You're well worthy her love, and I can't say more than that, though I tried a year. But she's coming to. You'd better wrap this blanket around her. Young girls are sometimes bashful about appearing before their lovers in such scant attire—though she has no cause to be afraid," smiled Little Cassino, taking a blanket from the croup of his horse and passing it to Bush Tipton.

Then he turned to where the baffled assassin lay, not having stirred a member since that second deadly jump. The young miner had alighted fairly upon the neck and head of Gin Cocktail, breaking the one and crushing in the other with his heavy iron-shod heels.

CHAPTER XXVI. A VICTIM OF JEALOUSY.

MEANTIME, what fate had befallen Estelle Mack, the wife of the ill-fated gymnast? To explain her, as yet, enigmatical disappearance, the reader must go back to the Temple on the evening when Red Pepper abducted Zoe, instead of the game Big George set him at.

Only for his stumble and fall over the body of Little Cassino at the door of the green-room, the desperado would doubtless have succeeded in his bold attempt. But, as he fell, Estelle slipped from his grasp and fled from him, into the green-room, the only avenue of escape left open. The darkness aided her in so far that Red Pepper seized one of the ballet-girls in her stead, nor discovered his mistake until hours later.

But, if favored by fortune in this respect, poor Estelle was to fall victim to a scarcely less diabolical plot. In the darkness she ran against some person, uttering a little cry of terror at the contact. A voice called her by name—a voice that she readily recognized. She replied, with just what words she never knew. But it was sufficient, since her voice plainly declared her identity, and instantly a pair of soft, warm arms wound around her trembling form.

"Come with me—hasten! He is hunting for you—he will murder you if he finds you now! Hasten—for the love of Our Mother! hasten!" The voice was that of a woman, eager yet guarded, and audible only to the ears of Estelle above the wild uproar and trampling with which the wooden walls resounded. Never dreaming of treachery—why should she?—Estelle followed the woman. Across the room, through a low, triangular opening in one corner, now creeping, groping their way blindly through a maze of rough beams and scantlings, progressing with wonderful ease and certainty considering the obstacles; it was as though the woman-guide possessed the visual powers of a cat. At length she paused, pushing aside a short plank and stepping through into a small, dimly-lighted dressing-room.

"There—you are safe here; no one can touch you now," spoke the woman, as she pulled Estelle after her and slipped the plank into place again.

"Let me go—I must find him—George—they are murdering him!" gasped Estelle, brushing the hair back from her eyes and glancing wildly around her.

At her words an almost terrifying change passed over the other woman's countenance. Naturally beautiful, though of a brilliant, passionate type, a *brune* in whose veins coursed the hot blood of the sun-lands, her face now became dark and frowning, a menacing light in her eyes. As though aware of this fact and lest her intended victim should take the alarm and escape her toils after all, she averted her head, bending over a trunk as she spoke.

"One moment and we will go. But you are ill-fainting! Smell this; it will give you strength—ah—ha!"

She moved swiftly toward Estelle, a crumpled handkerchief in hand. Bewildered, dazed though she was, Estelle detected the cloying odor of chloroform, and started back, but ere she could raise her voice, that 1 the form was upon her, bearing her back, pressing the druged cloth to her nostrils, holding it firmly in place until the girl-wife's struggles ceased and her body hung limply across the arm of the trapeze.

A low, mocking laugh parted the lips of the Mexican as she allowed her victim to sink to the floor, flinging the tell-tale handkerchief back into her trunk and closing the lid.

"So!" she hissed, standing over the senseless girl, tapping the pale lips with one tiny satin-slipped foot. "So! you will cross my path and then laugh at poor Paquita because she likes not your soft smiles and sweet looks upon her lover! You will step on my heart—like my footsteps on your lips—you will laugh and coquet with him—with my Pelucho, eh? No—not any more. My time it is now! I laugh at you—I bruise your baby lips—I spit upon you—ha! ha! I, Paquita—I do this!"

A beautiful, brilliant demon she appeared as she gave full vent to her wild jealousy, but the sport quickly ended. She heard the voice of the manager, Ben Coffee, calling aloud the name of Estelle. There was yet danger of discovery, and to guard against this was her first move.

She dragged the body of her victim into the further corner, rolled the heavy trunk close up against it, then piled clothes over all, drawing a long breath of relief as she drew back and assured herself that all was hidden from view, unless a close search was instituted. Then, knowing that the drug administered was powerful enough to insure her victim's silence for hours, Paquita left the room, locking the door, and hastened along the passage leading to the stage.

She reached this in time to hear the dying words of the young gymnast. Affected as was the scene, it failed to touch her heart. She only regretted that Estelle was for the time being insensible to the magnitude of her loss.

A few words will explain the cause of the Mexican's bold action. That she had been bitterly jealous of Estelle, for months, everybody connected with the troupe was well aware. Her avowed lover, a Spanish gymnast, had been deeply smitten with the fair songstress. Estelle treated him courteously, as she did all with whom she came in contact, but one evening Pelucho threw caution to the winds and declared his passion in terms not to be misconstrued. Before Estelle could reply, Paquita appeared, and only for a prompt interference, would have slain her supposed rival then and there. Estelle sought to explain, but she would not listen. A king in her eyes, Paquita would not believe that any woman could remain insensible to his love. Possibly all would have blown over, in time, but a powerful tempter was near, and Paquita only too eagerly seized the opportunity of ridding her of a dreaded rival. A note was handed her, which she read and then destroyed. Her answer was prompt. On the succeeding night she would do the work—place Estelle in the hands of the writer or any other who might be deputized to pay her the sum pledged.

Thanks to the disturbance created by the Pepper brothers, she was unable to secure her victim with far less difficulty than she had anticipated, and the following events still further favored her scheme.

While upon the stage—now the scene of a tragedy from real life—her eyes were roving restlessly in search of one particular face, not in vain. A gigantic half-breed caught her glance, and worked his way around to her side. One look was sufficient. A gesture of her hand bade him keep close beside her as the stage cleared after the death of George Mack.

"All is well," she whispered, in Spanish. "I have her safe, but we must watch our chance to get her out of the theater."

"That will be soon," he tersely replied. "They have struck a hot trail—listen!" It was the deep roar of vengeance—the cry for blood—the blood of the desperado brothers.

"Come! they are clearing the building—follow me!"

Together they reached the little dressing-room. Paquita dragged the senseless girl from under the pile of clothes, hastily drawing a loose, dark-colored gown over the fanciful Scottish dress, then bade the half-breed take Estelle in his arms. This he did, first passing her a weighty bag of gold. Paquita led the way, to make sure that the road was clear, and two minutes later the giant half-breed was gliding rapidly through the street, toward the foothills. Though the town was in an uproar, with men running here and there, in every direction, no one appeared to notice him, and in a few minutes he reached a clump of bushes in which his horse was tethered.

Mounting, he rode rapidly down the valley, holding the senseless woman before him. He was following almost exactly in the footsteps of Red Pepper, though he knew it not. But shortly after passing the side-trail which led to Greaser Flat, he veered to the north, carefully picking his way through a narrow, rock-cumbered ravine or canyon. And thus he pressed on through the night, never drawing rein until the far-distant mountain peaks were lightening with the first rays of dawn.

Just distinguishable through the gloom, a square stone building rose before him. Halting, he uttered a sharp whistle, then rode on until his animal touched the broad stone slab before the door. Dismounting, he knocked at the massive door. Creaking upon its rusty hinges, it opened, and he entered. The low-ceilinged room only contained one other figure; a hideous old crone, with wrinkled skin and toothless mouth, who snatched up a smoking torch and motioned him to follow, without a word. Through that room into a smaller one the hag lighted the way. Stooping, she raised a trap-door, revealing a narrow, steep flight of steps. Descending these, she opened an upright door, heavily studded with iron, by means of a ponderous key. Obeying to her gesture, the half-breed descended four more steps, into a small stone-walled cell. A bundle of mouldy grass lay in one corner. Upon this he placed his senseless burden, then retreated. The door was closed, locked and barred; the double footsteps retreated—died away; then all was still as death.

How many hours Estelle lay in this trance-like state, can only be surmised; but at last she did awake, with a feeble moan of terror. She raised her head, but the utter gloom confused her. She could only recollect—what? Like a flash it came to her—that wild, terrible shriek—his voice!

"George—George—God of mercy! where am I?"

She cried aloud until the muffled, unearthly sound of her own voice smothered within those massive walls terrified her. Seized with a nameless terror, she sprang to her feet and sought to fly—only to be beaten back by the senseless stones. Again and again, with the same result. Then, exhausted by her struggles, she crouched upon the damp floor, sobbing pitifully, striving in vain to recall what had happened.

In no way could she account for her present situation. The last she could remember was her hearing the wild cry of her husband; all after that was a blank. The assault of Red Pepper, her escape, the brief interview with Paquita—alike had faded from her mind.

In her delirious despair she could hear his voice calling to her—begging her to save him from some frightful peril; and something was holding her back, keeping her from her rightful place at his side. Desperately she struggled to free herself—yet unable to move a limb. And then—with one long, piercing shriek her head sunk forward and she was lost to all consciousness.

It was hours before she recovered her senses, but when she did, it was all at once. She sat up, her eyes widely dilated, every sense on the alert.

She heard footsteps—faint and muffled as though coming from a distance. Then there was a fumbling, a dull clinking as of metal striking against metal. Dreading, she scarcely knew what, she sprang to her feet and shrank away from the sound until the stone wall barred further retreat.

Then the door swung heavily open, a bright light filled the cell. With a low cry, Estelle covered her face with her hands.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 345.)

UNAPPRECIATED WOMAN.—We often meet the quiet, shy woman, of whom none of her friends and associates understand the full value or the true beauty. Tender, sensitive, reserved, she is like some flower which gives out its full scent only to the sunshine. She is thought reserved, may be proud, may be painfully shy, may be merely domestic and occupied mainly with her household cares; but her soul is as a flame of fire burning with passionate longings for a life of poetry, of art, of literature, of music.

UNTO THE PERFECT DAY.

BY JOHN GOSSIP.

Let the same joy with which the day began
Be in all hearts, and crown its hours when ended;
Thus may each day be of that coming One
A shade at least, however far transcended;
Then shall we know our duty is but done
When scarce a day remaineth to be mended!

Corsairs of History.

IV.—CAPTAIN ROBERT KIDD.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM.

ONE bleak, blustering afternoon, in the year 1670, a man stood upon a bold and rugged point of land jutting out from the wave-washed coast of Ireland, and arm-like encircling in his rocky embrace, thus sheltering it from the rude buffets of the storm-tossed ocean, a small bay, almost completely land-locked, for only a winding channel connected it with the sea without.

Standing upon the narrow neck of land, as he was, the gaze of the man could be turned upon the broad expanse of waters, rolling miles away, until they met the horizon, or landward upon the quiet bay, near the shore of which, nestled away amid a small grove, could be seen a small cabin, evidently the home of some poor fisherman.

Above the tree-tops curled a lazy wreath of smoke, unaffected by the rude wind that howled upon the ocean, and upon the sandy beach were hauled several small boats, while a staunch little craft of ten tons idly rocked upon the swell a short distance from the shore.

But not upon this scene of peaceful beauty was the man gazing, for his eyes were fixed intently upon the chaos of waters where was visible a dark object beaten about rudely at their mercy.

"Yes, it is a boat, and I saw distinctly a human form within it; I must hasten to the rescue, ere the frail craft is dashed upon the rocks."

So saying, the speaker, a man already upon the shady side of life, but with a bold and kindly face, hurried rapidly down a small pathway leading to the bay-shore and disappeared within the small cabin, to the next instant came forth dressed in a st r m-suit, and hasten to the beach.

Springing into a seemingly frail but staunch life-boat, he seized the oars, and with strong and rapid strokes urged his little craft onward toward the channel leading seaward.

A half-hour passed and he had gained an offing, and was battling with the wind and waves in his manly struggle to reach the tempest-tossed boat, for which he had embarked at the risk of his own life.

A long, hard pull, and he came alongside the life-boat of some ship, containing two human beings, a woman and a boy, both showing every indication of suffering from exposure and hunger.

Taking the boat in tow, the man started upon his return, an easy task apparently, for the wind and waves soon drove him into the channel, and ere long he landed in front of his cabin, and drew the wrecked boat upon the sands.

Alas! one of its occupants had ceased longer to feel hunger or pain, for she lay dead in the arms of the almost lifeless boy; but tenderly he raised the frail and lovely form, and carried it to his cabin, followed by the tottering youth, who was but ten years of age, and who clung closely to the cold and pulseless hand of his mother.

In a grave, dug beneath the sheltering grove of trees, the poor woman was laid in her narrow bed by the old fisherman, who adopted the boy as his own, for he quickly recovered from his illness, brought on by exposure and hunger, and made known to his kind benefactor how his mother and himself were all that had been saved from a gallant vessel, that was bearing them home, after a long residence in America, where his father had held an official position of trust.

In his lonely life, there by the seaside, the old fisherman lured the boy to forget his former friends, and ere three years had passed away he ceased to hold any memory of the past, save the grave in the grove.

That little waif was he, that in after years, became known to the world as Robert Kidd, the pirate.

Reared as a fisher lad, forgetting the past, and living only in the present, he grew to manhood, and became known as the most daring seaman upon that wild coast, and one whom all the maidens far and wide loved for his nobleness of heart, his superb form and handsome face.

But at heart the brave youth felt no sympathy for any of his companions around him, excepting the good old fisherman whom he loved as a father; no, the early training of the boy still lingered in his being, and therein germinated the first seed of future misery, for he dared to look beyond his lowly condition and turn his eyes with love upon the daughter of a nobleman, whose grand old castle stood upon the other shore of the little bay, and was visible from the fisherman's humble cabin door.

And more, the fair young noblewoman, as beautiful in character as in person, returned the love of the fisher lad, for he had saved her life from drowning when the pleasure-boat of her father, the earl, went down upon the bay, and since then his handsome face and courtly manners had been before her heart's vision.

In return for the life of his daughter the earl had offered gold to her preserver, but was proudly, yet politely rebuked, which so offended the nobleman that he, from that moment, hated the bold youth.

Yet it was the same old story, the lovers met, and each meeting bound them more closely together, until at last their secret was discovered, and the maiden was made a prisoner in the castle, while the following night a party of men landed at the fisherman's cabin, and after a fatal conflict, in which the old fisherman was slain, in attempting to protect his adopted son, the youth was bound, wounded and bleeding, and carried aboard a vessel that lay at anchor in the bay.

Five years passed, and one night a large vessel dropped anchor in the bay, after passing through the narrow channel in a manner that proved her pilot well acquainted with every turn and sunken rock.

That vessel was commanded by Robert Kidd, who after five years of wandering and adventure, after his escape from the press-gang the earl had caused to seize him, had returned to the home of his boyhood, the captain of a fine privateer, upon which "in the West Indies and along the American coast he had won a reputation as a most experienced seaman and brave man."

But Kidd found no welcome there, for his adopted father had lain for years in his grave, the mound that had marked the last resting-place of his mother was overgrown with rank

weeds, and the woman of his love had become the wife of another, her equal in the social realm, and had forgotten, or remembered but as a dream, her girlish love for the handsome fisher lad, who more true, had never banished her fair face from his thoughts, in all his hours of captivity, suffering, danger and wanderings.

Embittered by the change that had come, and cursing the hand of Fate that had so cruelly rested upon him, Captain Kidd returned to his old cruising-ground, and, lost to honor, mingled together the career of trader, swagler, and pirate, and in a "little rattle vessel" that could run into all kinds of waters, he was always looking about upon mysterious voyages, and became known as a desperate man and most successful freebooter.

So great became his name in a few years, as "an experienced navigator and daring seaman," that upon the principle of "setting a rogue to catch a rogue," Lord Bellamont, Governor of Barbadoes, and many others in authority, selected him as "the most fitting man to be entrusted with the command of a government ship, to be employed in cruising against pirates, as he was well acquainted with all their haunts."

As this plan, however, met with no encouragement, Lord Bellamont, and others, who "knew what captures had been made by the pirates, and what prodigious wealth must be in their possession, fitted out, at their own expense, a well-armed vessel, to give in charge of Robert Kidd."

For this ship, to legalize her transactions, they obtained for Captain Kidd the king's commission, from which I abstract the following:

"WILLIAM REX.
"WILLIAM THE THIRD, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, KING, ETC.:

"To our truly and well beloved Capt. Robert Kidd, commander of the Adventure, galley."

"Greeting: Whereas we are informed that natives of New York and elsewhere, in our plantations in America, have associated themselves with divers others, to commit many and great piracies, robberies, and depredations on the seas, etc."

"Now ye, that we being desirous * * * * * to bring the said pirates, freebooters and sea-rovers to justice, have thought fit, and do hereby give and grant to the said Robert Kidd (to whom our commissions for exercising the office of lord high admiral of England, have granted a commission as a private man-of-war, bearing date the 11th day of December, 1693) full power and authority to apprehend, seize, * * * all such pirates, etc., being either our subjects, or of other nations, * * * which you shall meet with upon the seas, or coasts of America."

Another commission was also given to Captain Kidd, it being in time of war, justifying him in the seizure of the French merchant-ships, should he meet any.

Condemned in his own mind by the wild career he had determined to lead, it was before sailing upon his cruise that he was guilty of one act of his life that has ever been connected with his name, adding dread and horror thereto.

I refer to his burying his Bible, one that had been with him in the wreck with his poor mother, and which, upon his return to his humble cabin, he had secured and taken away with him.

His wicked life being so at variance with its divine teachings, he did not care to keep the sacred book by him, so one dark and stormy night he went alone to the seashore, washed by Plymouth Sound, and, digging a deep hole, buried the Bible within, after which deed he resigned himself to his evil career, and became reckless of his fate.

Holding his commissions, Captain Kidd sailed from Plymouth in May, 1696, in the Adventure galley, armed and manned with thirty guns and a crew of eighty men, and shaped his course across the ocean to New York, taking, *en route*, a French vessel as a prize.

Arriving in New York, he re-inforced his ship's crew until he had one hundred and fifty-five men, when he sailed for Madeira, then to St. Jago, and then to Madagascar, the known rendezvous of pirates, reaching there about a year after his departure from Plymouth.

After a long and unsuccessful cruise, the Adventure sailed for Bab's Key (a place upon a little island at the entrance to the Red Sea) and there it was he made known to his crew that he intended to make a corsair of his ship, and his followers not being adverse, he captured a small Moorish vessel, from which he, however, gained no booty.

This act alarmed the coast, and a Portuguese man-of-war was sent after Kidd, who met and engaged her for six hours, when, finding her too strong for him, he hauled off and made his escape.

About this time, as Kidd would not capture a Dutch merchantman, his crew mutinied, and he slew one of them and promptly quelled it, which at once gave him a strange influence over the wild and lawless characters he commanded.

Coasting along Malabar, Kidd met and plundered a number of richly-freighted vessels, one of which, the Queda Merchant, brought him ten thousand pounds, which being divided, gave to his crew £200 each, and to himself, £8,000.

Placing some of his men on board the Queda Merchant, Kidd sailed with his two vessels to Madagascar, where, when he had dropped anchor, he was visited by a number of freebooter commanders, who at once informed him they had heard he was hunting them down to hang them, but that, as he had formerly been their friend, he should do nothing so base, and as he had really become a pirate, he kept his word and did them no harm.

As the Adventure was old and leaky, Kidd fitted out the Queda Merchant, giving to her the name of his former ship, and in her continued his depredations and piracies, until his name became feared on every sea and shore.

With a strange and fatal idea, that in spite of his sea murders and robberies, his commissions, and the influence of Lord Bellamont and others would protect him, Captain Kidd sailed for Boston, stopping at various places along the coast, however, to bury his own immense booty, and arrived in port with his ship richly laden with spoils.

No sooner did he show himself in Boston than measures were taken to arrest him; but, regardless of the danger overhanging him, he walked the streets and led a wild, reckless life, until one day he was secretly seized and thrown into prison, where he remained until conveyed in an English frigate to England. There, in May, 1701, he was arraigned for "piracy and robbery on the high seas."

It was urged in Kidd's defense that he had served under the king's commission, but this was not listened to, as his many piracies proved he had aided what he had gone forth to subdue; also, many acts of courage and patriotism, in fighting the foes of England, were brought up to favor him; but, all to no purpose; he was found guilty of every charge, and, with others of his crew, "was executed at Execution Dock, and afterward hung up on a chain, at a conspicuous place on the river," where his body remained suspended and exposed for many years, a terror to every seaman that sailed by the dreaded and crime-haunted spot.



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WILL HAVE IT!—A lady subscriber in Lake City, Florida, writes: "Rest assured that I will never cease to be a subscriber to the SATURDAY JOURNAL as long as I can get a dollar. Would sooner go without a new dress than to miss getting the dear old JOURNAL. A cousin of mine and myself had quite a controversy over the paper and its merits as compared with the other weeklies, and both mother and sister joined in with me in standing up for the JOURNAL. With three such advocates cousin had of course to give up, and now having tried the JOURNAL is of our own minds." The JOURNAL is always pleased to have its merits contrasted with that of the other weeklies, week by week, and we wish our friends, like the above correspondent, would make the relative merits of the popular weeklies a subject of discussion.

Sunshine Papers.

Foreign and American.

"Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land;
Whose heart hath not within him burned,
As home his footsteps he hath turned
From wandering on a foreign strand?"

So asked Scott; and it was all very well for him to do so, seeing that he was an Englishman. One of the elementary forces of the British nature is its unbounded adoration of its own country and nationality. A true representative of Johnny Bull thinks the highest blessing ever bestowed upon a mortal is the being born in England; and the Frenchman believes there is no land like his sunny France; the Italian worships his Italy; Russians love their forests, and wastes, and broad dominion; the Japanese are jealously true to their island kingdom; and no doubt the Esquimaux prefers his eternal snows to any home in the most seductive climate. But where, oh! where, shall we find the American who has the same idolatrous love for his country? Who thinks it is a glorious birthright to have been born in the United States? Who asserts, with the pride of a Webster, "I was born an American; I live an American; I shall die an American"? Whose loyalty finds expression in the old toast of Decatur, "Our country; our country, right or wrong"? Whose heart within him burns as home his footsteps he hath turned from wandering on a foreign strand?

The truth is, admiration of our own country is not just the style with us Americans. We do not like to be reminded that we were a short time ago petty colonies; and that our grandfathers drank herb tea and spun their own linen; and that our grandfathers wore garments made of homemade cloth; and that a Charles Dickens came here and made fun of us, and said of our villages that they looked as if they had all sprung up in the night, reminding one of mushrooms; and that by some other of our self-complacent friends across the seas we are believed to be very crude, and young, and ignorant, and uncultured. We are apt to forget that we have made more rapid progress in the century of our existence as a separate and distinct nationality than other peoples have in double the time. We forget that our skilled labor, and mechanisms, and manufactures in most branches, can already compete successfully with those of any known nation, in races where "the whole world come to run for the crown"; that our conveyances and systems of traveling are the most elegant, commodious, and complete known; that our people, en masse, are more thrifty, intelligent and bet-

ter educated than any other; that wealth and culture, among us, is a rule rather than an exception confined to an exclusive few, who inherit such by accident of birth; that our women are universally admitted to exceed those of any land in their combined attractions of being beautiful, graceful, artistically dressed, self-possessed, and well read; that we have come victorious out of every conflict in which we have engaged; that we hold the power to place ourselves first in the naval and commercial world; that we combine within our wonderful extent of territory every known climate and mineral resource; that we can row and shoot with the athletes of the world; and that, greatest and best of all, we are free, free, free!

Not only may it be said of every American his "soul is his own," but he owes no duty to a king—though I'm not sure that some of us would not admire to do so, judging by the enthusiastic adulation we bestow on every monarch and titled stranger who comes to see if Americans "are all white," and whether they know how to eat, and sleep, and talk, like other civilized tribes. To be sure, just now, we are making quite a time over our Centennial celebrations; though even concerning that there may be found Americans who will tell you, contemptuously, "Oh, I am not particular about visiting the Centennial Exhibition; I've attended the Vienna Exposition, and of course this cannot compare with it." But notwithstanding this little furor of national pride and aggrandizement, we still retain a sublime passion for aping foreign fashions and manners. To do just as is done abroad is a mania with a large class of Americans.

Our dresses must be cut by French patterns; our hats must be labeled "imported," and our new fabrics must have unpronounceable foreign names. We no longer employ a "dress-maker," but we patronize Mademoiselle Fussy, or Madame Pitty, importer of Parisian modes. We wear English walking hats, French turbans, or Princess, Marquise, Warwick, Bayonne, Arlington, or West End. If our gentlemen twirl a cane, they must feel positive that its mate, at that identical moment, is being twirled in Paris; they call on their tailors for English suits, French smoking jackets, Russian cloaks; they wear Lord Byron, Czar, and Piccadilly collars and cuffs; they smoke Spanish cigars, part their hair in Paris style, their whiskers in English style, and affect a German diet; they put a glass in one eye and declare, with a copied British drawl, "By Jove! awful nice girl that!" or, "Jove! it's such a deuced bore, don't you know?"

American girls make "nice," and "nasty," and "jolly," their pet adjectives because it is "English," and have over Paris Royal Jewels, or a new arrangement of the hair, because it is "Frenchy." And, in fact, the highest ambition of the average modern American young person is, some time, to visit his particular heaven—Paris!

Too often, I fear, our American hearts do not burn with ardent love of country when we return from wandering on a foreign strand. If so, let all such take warning:

"High though his titles, proud his name,
Roundless his wealth as wish can claim;
Despite those titles, power and pelf,
The wretch, concentrated all in self,
Lives, shall forfeit fair renown,
And doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust, from whence 'e sprung,
Unwept, unloved, and unremembered."

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

COUNTRY PEOPLE.

WHAT strange ideas some people have concerning "country people!" I was led to thinking upon this subject by a remark I once heard. A little boy, from the city, was visiting some friends in the country, and one day he uttered the following speech: "I think you are a pretty good-looking set of folks—for country people." It was the remark of a child and scarcely worth paying attention to, but there are so many grown people who have such a foolish and unjust opinion of those who have the misfortune (?) to reside in the country, I thought I would take up my pen in defense of the right, once more.

I cannot see why country people cannot be as well cultivated and possess as much knowledge as their city neighbors. Railroads now are plentiful and newspapers and magazines abound. People can read as much and as understandingly in country as in city, and the brain can be cultivated as well as the soil.

Country people are hospitable and generous, else the tramps would not leave the city to wander in the country. Their ears are ever open to the cry of distress and their hands are never closed to alleviate it. This kindness, generosity and charity are often imposed upon, they seem to prefer to aid all who call, for there must be some deserving creatures in the midst of so many who are destitute.

Visit in the country and you will find courteous people who will lay before you what they have and the best of it. If you have been invited you will be welcome and all will be done to render your stay pleasant and agreeable. There's always a spare room in the house.

If you are in trouble how many and many will aid you! Among country people there seems to be one bond of fraternal friendship. If Farmer John's barn is burned the neighbors will all turn out at the "raising" of a new one. If Farmer Tom is kept from work by sickness, his neighbors will cut down his trees for him, saw and split the wood for him, and they'll not send him in a heavy bill for their services. Do as you would be done by seems to be their motto, and well and nobly they act up to it.

Country people are thoughtful of others' comfort; for you will find by the pump or by the "old wooden bucket" a tin or dipper that the tired traveler or weary wayfarer may refresh himself. And the dipper is not chained to the well or pump lest any one should steal it. Country folks can form no conception of a person who would be so base as to take the dipper after having a refreshing draught; it would be as bad as for a person to rob the pocket of a man who had saved him from drowning.

The quiet ways of country people have a charm about them that pleases you. They seem to glide along smoothly and grow old gradually, so gradually as to be almost imperceptible. The early hours they keep invigorates them and prolongs their lives. Most of their wealth lies in the product of their land and they take an honest pride in cultivating it.

Living so much among the works of Nature as they do, they are more apt to look up to Nature's God and thank Him for His benefits. It doesn't seem to me that a lover of Nature can be an atheist. Where God's handiwork is all round him he must acknowledge that this handiwork is not the work of chance.

There is not so much difference of caste in the country, nor so much prating about the pride of noble birth. Thus the country people are sociable and neighborly. They live among themselves, and when business causes them to go away, they still remember the dear

old home and its associations, and long for the time when they shall return.

God bless the country and God bless those that dwell in it! May the country people remain as unostentatious as they now are, and they will be happy. The massive monument does not seem to spurn the state headstone in the graveyard. As equal in life so they are equal in death and equal in the great "land of the hereafter."

EVE LAWLESS.

Foolscap Papers.

A Man of Great Presents.

ONE of my uncles, Mr. Caleb G. Whitehorn, Esquire, as he used to serenely write his name on due bills, was a very peculiar man in his way; in fact was one of our most distant relatives—so distant, indeed, that he was away beyond speaking to any others of the family, and, like every one else of the family, he felt himself away above the rest, thereby to preserve the integrity of the race. Py pitching into every great movement of the day, and putting his head to it and frequently putting his foot into it, he got to be quite a prominent character, in his way.

He was the recipient of very numerous testimonials from great men, and others which of course, although he prided in them, did not exalt him any more in his own mind, from the fact that he was already exalted so high in his own estimation that it was impossible to go any higher. Nevertheless he was a harmless individual, and perfectly willing to pay his own way in the world as he went along, provided he didn't want to use his money for any other purpose.

Among the many presents which he received I find in looking over his diary the first was a switch by his affectionate father, who generally presented it with a neat speech, and as Caleb received it he was generally loud in applause. The old man only presented him with one end of the switch, however, and it used to tangle his legs up a good deal to carry that end on his back.

When a young man, he was presented by the literary society of his place, of which he was a member, with a gourd. Oh, it was a beautiful gourd, one of the very finest in the country, and had received the premium at the fair. It was such a nice present and it tickled him so much that it was difficult to restrain him from having it made right up into pumpkin pies on the spot. It beat all the gourds that ever were gored. It was such a beautiful, beautiful thing. He returned many thanks—but kept the gourd.

For his valuable services in furnishing weekly poetry to the village paper, the members of that sheet presented him an elegantly bound spelling-book, and he could not find words enough in the whole book to express his thankfulness. He used to pore over that book until he got poor himself, and treasured it all his life. But it never struck in much.

For an agricultural essay he was presented with a very fine beet. Perhaps owing to the delay it had died, but the fact of its being a dead beet did not lessen its character as a testimonial, and he kept it dried. He cherished it as his *bete noir*; if you know what that is.

He always took an unsounded and unselfish interest in other people's business, not because he ever made any money out of it, for he rather lost by it when he would come to foot the profit and loss, but because he rather felt that he could manage their much better than his own, and the Other People got together one day, and in a praiseworthy speech presented him with a well-deserved medal, as being the most meddlesome man in the town. He gently laid it away among the other archives of his eventual career.

He wrote a history of the United States which was considered very remarkable. It was always taken as any other history, because he maintained there was nothing like originality in any literary production, and was presented by the Historical Society, of which he would have been a member if it had not been from a mistake made in the color of the ballots, with them not having any other testimonial on hand just then) an aged goose, which he ever afterward kept in his own room, stuffed, and showed with pride.

For his able efforts in trying to get out of paying honest debts, and the invention of new and plausible excuses, at a convention of down-trodden but sensitive debtors, he was presented with a very large purse as an appreciation of his services. In a trembling hand I find this record in his diary, "but there was nothing in the purse."

For his earnest endeavors in trying to organize a society for the prevention of cruelty to old clothes, for which he showed till the day of his death an unflinching devotion, he was presented by his friends with an elegant and valuable box of scented toilet soap, and so highly did he value the gift, he preserved every cake of it religiously, and never upon any occasion would he use any of it. It was one of his ways, or at least it wasn't one of his ways.

At one period of his life he fell in love with a widow who had lost her husband some years before by another woman running off and forgetting to leave him, and in a tender moment sent her a valuable set of plated jewelry, and so highly did she appreciate the gift that, with a moment's delay, she reciprocated the compliment by sending one of the products of her own careful raising—a squash. Oh, but it was a beautiful squash, and for no consideration would he part with it. It was so fine and large, and so sentimental, and on it was inscribed, "Sweet's to the sweet." And even after the match was broken off, owing to some misunderstanding of the state of feelings existing between them, he kept it hanging up in his room.

At a charity fair, on account of his eminent popularity, he was presented with a handkerchief, not a common one, but half linen and half cotton, and in the return speech he flowerily observed that no matter how urgent an occasion demanded its use, he would keep the gift inviolate as long as he had a conventional coat-sleeve in his person, and that costly gift is just as new to-day as it was when he received it.

Various other rare and munificent testimonials which he received in the course of a long and eventful life, he has carefully catalogued, and will be brought before the world when I prepare a minute history of the Whitehorn family, which will be as soon as I can get the details of the exact manner of the deaths of a good number of the old stock who committed suicide by hanging or hired hands to help them.

Yours, till the last cent,
WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

The labor of the body relieves us from the fatigues of the mind; and this it is which forms the happiness of the poor.

The grace of God makes itself known in men of great genius by little things, and men of little understanding by the greatest.

Topics of the Time.

—That the late Centennial Exposition was a great pecuniary success is not the least gratifying fact of this wonderful World's Fair. The summary of receipts show that over 8,000,000 of paying visitors attended the Exhibition, the cash receipts from this source amounting to about \$3,750,000. To these receipts must be added the income from concessions or privileges granted exhibitors and others, which amount to more than \$1,000,000, thus giving a total of nearly \$5,000,000 of income. The outgo for running expenses has been about \$1,800,000, which would leave a surplus of some \$3,000,000 to be apportioned among the stockholders.

—And another interesting fact was the gradual progress in popularity of the great show. It did not, like all ordinary shows, jump into success, but grew into it. Thus, in May, the daily average was 19,946; in June, 36,756; in July, 34,481; in August, 33,655; in September, 51,961; in October, 103,456. The longer the show lasted, the greater the wonder grew, and if it could have been kept open another month or two, with comfort to both exhibitors and visitors, the figure for November and December would not doubt have borne even more convincing proof of this progressive popularity. Taking the entire 159 days together, the daily average attendance has been about 50,000, which is 40,000 less than was originally calculated upon as needful to pay expenses. The result is gratifying, as showing that the expenses have been much less than were estimated at the outset.

—An Ulster County, N. Y., demoiselle is engaged in making a cloak entirely of partridge feathers. It will be at least 10,000 feathers of different sizes, the lower portion of the cloak being made of the tail feathers and then ranging to the breast feathers and coming next, the variegated plumage around the neck of the bird will encircle the white throat of the lady. It will require about one hundred partridges to fill out the regular course of feathers, which are placed in layers similar to the way in which they are on the bird. The birds are shot by her brother, who pops them over whenever she wants them, only asking that she will nicely cook what is left for himself to line his epigastrium.

—Henry Islop McIvor, a native of Edinburgh, is a leader in the Serbian army. He has fought on four continents in twenty years, and almost always on the side of the smallest numbers. He gained a medal in the Indian mutiny, fought under Garibaldi in 1859, under Lee in 1861, for the Mexicans after the rebellion, with a little Indian skirmishing in Texas. He was in the Cretan rebellion, served in Greece against the brigands, was in the patriot army in Cuba for a while, and then had a cavalry command in Egypt. He fought in France under Faidherbe against the Germans, turned up in Paris as a Communist, and to Herzegovina as a correspondent of a London paper, and is now a leader of Serbian irregulars.

—If anything in this uncertain world will sober a drunkard it is an enforced bath in the Niagara river just above the Falls. A short time ago four intoxicated men were capsize in a small boat near Chippewa, and were swept into the rapids. Three of them clung to the hull of the boat, but the fourth broke loose from their grasp and was kept afloat with great difficulty. The captain of a tow-boat caught sight of them and headed for them with all the steam his vessel would carry. Just as the yawl struck the tug and was secured, the four men vigorously struck out for the shore, swimming in good style for dear life. The man who had been the most troublesome reached land first, and straightway repaired to the nearest bar-room.

—No thoughtful observer could witness the closing of the Exposition without feeling that it was a grand and a great experiment which, as nothing else has ever done, gauged our social and domestic progress and our quality, not as political elements in the world, but as civilized men and women. Whether it pays stockholders or not in a pecuniary sense is a small matter; it has achieved a grand end; it has shown us ourselves as others see us. The most useful day in the life of the great man of a country town is that which brings him to the metropolis to measure himself with men who have had better chances than he. It is the consciousness of what we are that gives us strength, not of what we are.

—Mlle. Mercus, the young lady who has been playing the part of Joan of Arc in Herzegovina, is Dutch, about thirty years of age, of diminutive stature, dark, and not handsome. She has squandered the greater portion of a large fortune in the realization of her romantic dreams; nevertheless, she is still in possession of more than \$70,000. Her first fancy was to erect a Protestant temple at Jerusalem, in front of the monument supposed to be Christ's tomb. The temple, which cost \$14,000, still exists. Her present ambition is to command a battery of artillery, and she recently gave \$1,300 for the purchase of guns, but the gentleman intrusted with the money disappeared, and nothing further has been heard of him. This extraordinary lady is not admired, having supported the Paris Commune, and approved of the Archbishop's assassination. She spends her time running after battlefields and ventures whenever they are to be encountered.

—Few persons are aware that veritable Egyptian mummies are ground up into paints. But in this country and in Europe mummies are used for this purpose—the asphaltum with which they are impregnated being of a quality superior to that which can elsewhere be obtained, and producing a peculiar brownish tint when made into paint, which is prized by distinguished artists both of this and other countries. The ancient Egyptians, when they put away their dead, wrapped in clothes saturated with asphaltum, and, as it were, better than they knew, and could never have realized the fact that ages after they had been laid in the tombs and pyramids along the Nile, their dust would be used in painting pictures in a world then undiscovered, and by artists whose names were to them unknown. Thus a portion of one of the Pharaohs, or a Potiphar, or even of the historic Mrs. Potiphar, may even now be on the canvas of a Veruet, a Millais, or a Church, who may question?

—Sir John Reed and party, under the guidance of Texas Jack, are on their way to Rollin's Spring, Wyoming, where they will remain from six weeks to two months. They will then go South through Colorado to Texas, remaining there until the spring campaign opens, when Texas Jack will join Terry's command, concluding with an expedition with Captain Bailey of the English army, to the unexplored regions of the Big Horn, spending five months in that country. Texas Jack ought to have a good story to tell after that long tramp is over. To be one of the great scout's companions during the next six months would be to see a great deal of true Western life. It is such adventures that give material for stories like Texas Jack's "Ride and Tomahawk," now running through our columns, and, of course, written expressly for us.

—The Arab tribes in Algeria, as if obeying a common order, have set fire to the forests in the three provinces. In Constantine the timber districts are threatened with complete destruction, the flames having broken out at a hundred points at once. In Oran, all the large forests of Sidi-Bel-Abbes, Ben-Youn at Sidi-Thira at Daya, are a prey to the fire, which covers an area of fifty miles by thirty. Not a wood has been spared. The destructive elements have also desolated territories of Tlemcen and Nemours, and on the eastern frontier of the colony the Mussulmans of Tunis aided the Arabs in the evil work. Such a race of vandals deserve obliteration from the face of the earth, we Christians might say, if we were not doing the same thing!

Readers and Contributors.

Declined: "Miss Betty"; "Blanche Matland"; "Hallowe'en Story"; "Morning Calls"; "Violet"; "A Spruce Chap"; "What Lullaby Lost, and Why"; "The Happy Night"; "Miss Kate's creative reflections"; "The Mountain of Gold"; "How It Ended."

Accepted: "Prayer for To-day"; "The Child and the Lily"; "The Mad Pilot"; "Mother-Love"; "A Longing"; "A Hundred Years"; "Doubts and Hopes." CHAS. R. L. M. MS. returned as per stamps enclosed.

RAYMOND W. Do not care to use the poem under the conditions implied.
W. A. S. Have not a full set of the papers.—The Centennial receipts were about \$4,250,000.

M. J. A. Poem is too artificial—too far-fetched in expression. Poems on such themes should be direct in expression and simple in terms.

O. L. D. The sketches are among the *unavailable*. They merit use somewhere, but we cannot give them place. We have more than a supply of such matter.

JULIA W. The wages are low. Perhaps it will be a stepping-stone to something better. It will learn you how to do business, which is really to learn a profession.

BILLY BOY. Take lesson from your sister. You can be of great assistance to one another where perfect confidence is established. Ladies are sensitive about making advances, and your sister expects from a brother the token or sign of his trust in her.—Your age is not too young for marriage, but be wise and enjoy the quietude of your pleasant home life for several years yet. Twenty-five is quite young enough for stepping into "the yoke."

MAJOR DUNN. There is really such a substance as you indicate, from which wax candles are made. It is called *sewax* or mineral wax. It is found in Meldona and Galicia in considerable quantities, and in small quantities elsewhere in Europe, and almost uniformly in the veins of the igneous rocks of coal. It is undoubtedly the oleaginous residuum of animal matter.

MARIE LOUISE. Ist. The right or wrong of the act is the motive. Your own happiness is, or ought to be, a deciding consideration. For a man to maintain all of that which, with proper use of opportunities, lies within reach. 2d. As a girl of eighteen you should have as many privileges as a girl of fourteen. If you are now denied it is not your own fault. Hold an inquiry with yourself and see, 3d. As it is entirely your own choice, and you are free to do or not as your friend suggests, you should try the experiment, doing it cheerfully and freely, and see what comes of it.—indicating to him that you have done it. It is wide and twelve friends all around where friends are none so many.

COHAN BOY writes: "Some time ago I was at a party, and in a crowd, I think I pushed a young lady. She passed a few remarks on my conduct, and I replied in words more forcible than polite. Which was most to blame? and ought I to apologize?" If you are now denied it is not your own fault. Hold an inquiry with yourself and see, 3d. As it is entirely your own choice, and you are free to do or not as your friend suggests, you should try the experiment, doing it cheerfully and freely, and see what comes of it.—indicating to him that you have done it. It is wide and twelve friends all around where friends are none so many.

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"COUSIN MAUD." We take great pleasure in helping you to some hints which may enable you to make pretty gifts for your little cousin's Christmas. Buy a yard or two of white buckram or wigman, and cut ten pieces, each eight inches wide and twelve inches long. With a variety of single zephyr wools—gray-colored—but none of the stitches of these entirely around, but quite loosely—the stitches about a quarter of an inch apart. Lay these pieces side by side together, then double one across, to form a book, fastening through the middle with several strands of worsted tied on the outside, and sew the tassels. Upon the outer leaf glue a handsome picture and some fancy letters forming your cousin's name; and all the succeeding years you may give pretty pictures as you can collect, arranging them as tastefully as possible. You will find these very pretty articles to make for fairs. For little boys you can knit long stockings, and give them in wools; and these may be rendered doubly attractive by attaching a few bells to the part which would cross the child's ankles. Give the gift of a few wools you can knit bright coverings for balls.

MISS M. D. W. Lynn, Mass., writes: "Is it or is it not correct and polite for ladies meeting upon the street or in public buildings to stop and talk and greet each other and shake hands? By giving your opinion of this subject you will decide a disputed question." People who meet friends in any public place should avoid all demonstrativeness and greet one another by a simple shake of the hand, and as quietly as possible; but there is no reason why they should not stop a little aside to speak, so long as they are not in the way of other people, and others. There is nothing more ill-bred than any acts or speeches in public which may attract attention.

E. E. M. Rahway, says: "I want to give a young lady a present, and I would like to give her an engagement-ring; for I don't want her to do that. I like the girl but I don't want to marry her. I don't want to tell what the young lady may think; therefore, my advice to you would be to select some other present beside a ring. The gift of a ring, from a gentleman to a lady, is very apt to be interpreted as a proposal; and gifts of jewelry between mere acquaintances is not in good taste. Give the lady a handsome book, or picture, or a handsome case of perfumery instead."

RALPH A. W. asks: "Is it necessary when a gentleman desires to shake hands with a person who has not on gloves that he should withdraw his own? Is there any harm in a gentleman's kissing a young lady good-night, when leaving her after an evening call?" If you meet an acquaintance upon the street, or at any public place, where the meeting must be very brief, there is no necessity for your withdrawing your gloves; but on entering a parlor you should offer your hand ungloved to your hostess. You had better omit the good-night, if you are going with a young lady, unless you are engaged to her.

"ONLY A GIRL" writes: "Are felt hats considered stylish enough to wear on visits to visiting costumes? Are colored hose still worn? What are the leading colors? Please suggest a handsome New Year's costume for a young lady of seventeen, slender and dark. I am sure you will give some stylish cousins in town. I suppose you will think my questions rather trivial; but please take into consideration that I am a poor girl, and I take pleasure in giving 'Only a Girl' the desired information. Felt hats—the fine French felts, in light colors, are worn in evening and visiting.—Colored hose is still in great vogue. Dark brown, navy-blue, cardinal-red, and myrtle-green being the favorite shades.—A canary or lemon-colored silk, made with a long train and a day or two of hours with an hour or so of recreation between. Half an hour of study at a time is long enough for a child of seven. And a dozen words a day are enough to require of him; but see that he understands the meaning of each word that he is required to spell by talking to him about a word, and giving him simple sentences in which it is used, and allowing him to give you like sentences. Make his reading lessons as interesting as possible by talking a great deal about them, and telling him interesting anecdotes about them. Blocks, marbles, clothes-pins, and numerous other playthings and household articles may be employed as means of teaching him the rudiments of arithmetic. Teach your children that quarreling is ill-mannered and unlovely, and that it is better to avoid angry altercations and be called a coward than to take part in it. But, if children are once engaged in a quarrel, avoid all interference with it if possible. It will accustom them to a few of the roughnesses which they must meet in the real battle of life."

UNA-SWEETED questions on hand will appear next week.

A LONGING—WITH COMMENTS.

BY HARVEY HOWARD.

"Oh! had you the wings of an eagle you'd fly
Through the sweet, dewy morning air up to the sky;
Far from the wrangling and strife of the earth,
Where the sweet stars have their hallowed birth;
Where the stern hand of the death-angel never
Swings his sharp scythe, from a loved one to sever-
er;
Where the dust and the heat of the world below,
And the withered flowers of the earth cannot go;
Where the rose has no thorn; where the bee has
no sting;
As he hums his sweet music on gossamer wings;
Where the smile has no frown, and the song has
no sigh;
Where the gleam has no gloom, and the laughter
no cry;
Where the light never chases the darkness away,
For the night is as bright and as fair as the day!"

I ask not for wings of an eagle, to fly
Away from the earth to the blue dome on high;
I ask not for pinions to bear me away
From the land where the night but enhances the day;
Where the darkness but shows me there is a
worse doom.
Than to have my bright gleam sometimes hid by
the gloom;
Than to live in the world where my brothers and I
Laugh all the more gayly because we must cry,
And smile all the brighter because we must weep,
And walk but the straighter because others creep;
Where the thorn but increases the scent of the
flower;
And the weakness of youth, lives to manhood his
power.
I ask not for wings—I would just as soon stay,
To sleep in the nighttime, and work in the day.
And, suppose that the wings which you wish were
bestowed,
Who's going up with you to show you the road?
Who's going to leave all the joy that's below
To sail through the air like a fool of a crowd?
Who's going to fly to—he doesn't know where,
Because he has dreamed there is some place more
fair?
Than this world of roses and lilies and things,
Even though, like a buzzard, he's gifted with
wings?
I'll take none of your wings in mine, if you please
Unless it's a chicken's, along with green peas.
You may go to the land where the day never ends,
Where the sun never rises and never descends;
But I'll take my chances along with the rest,
And when the sun sets I'll go further west.

Great Adventurers.

ARCTIC EXPLORERS.

Searchers for a North-west Passage and for the North Pole.

BY DR. LOUIS LEGRAND.

THE recent report of the English Arctic expedition, to repeat the attempt to penetrate the supposed "Open Polar Sea," fruitless, adds another to the already long list of failures to unravel the great mystery of the North; and its assumption that there is no open polar sea, but that it is one solid mass of ice at least eighty feet thick all over that most frigid region, again raises a discussion of the question—is there, as Dr. Kane asserted, open water all around the Pole? Dr. Hayes, after reading the English report, comes forward with a strong statement reaffirming his own and Dr. Kane's and Capt. Hall's discoveries in that remote and most desolate Northern Land, and what he says doubtless will impel other expeditions to try to penetrate the ice barrier that he believes surrounds an ocean of ever-moving water not less than one thousand miles in diameter. So the end of the long line of adventure, with its terrible peril, suffering and loss is not yet, and it may remain for American enterprise to solve the riddle that has baffled the skill of the most daring navigators for three hundred years.

The record of attempts to find the North-west Passage—to sail around the North American continent—is indeed full of brilliant names—Cahoon, Frohisher, Davis, Hudson, Behring, Baffin, Cook, in early days, and Ross, Parry, Scoresby, Franklin, Kane, McClintock, Hayes and Hall in recent years. The story of each one of these navigators forms a long and deeply interesting chapter in the history of sea adventure and exploration, and the gathered chapters make a volume of such rare value that we may very properly commend it to the notice of our friends and readers.

It has been stated, in our sketches of explorers already given, that the search was less for new lands than to try to find a passage through or around the "New World," by which to reach India and China—thus to save the long and dangerous passage around the continent of Africa. Hudson was sure he had struck it when he passed into the vast bay that now bears his name, and where he perished so miserably. But, all having failed, parliament inspired the search by offering a considerable reward to the successful discoverer. Davis cruised north and located the straits which bear his name in 1587; Baffin followed and went through these straits, in 1616, and explored Baffin's Bay as well as partially inspecting Lancaster Sound; Jones, Middleton, Ellis and others again investigated Hudson's Bay and its numerous "inlets," then the Hudson's Bay Company sent its men out from its stations to explore the north coast of the Arctic Sea.

In this way Capt. Hearne reached the shores of the Arctic Sea, 1771, and discovered the Coppermine river. The North-west Fur Company sent out Capt. Mackenzie, in 1780. He first found and traced Mackenzie's river and Whale Island. These discoveries only stimulated further investigations by the British government. It sent out Capt. Phipps, in 1773, to try to penetrate the open sea by way of Spitzbergen, but he was stopped by ice. Cook, in his attempt (1778) through Behring's Straits, as we have recorded, was not able to pass much beyond Icy Cape. But, all had faith in the existence of the open polar sea; and Baffin, in his "History of Voyages into the Polar Regions," (London, 1818,) so firmly espouses the theory of open waters, practicable to navigation around both North America and the Eastern continent that the British government offered a prize of £20,000 sterling to the navigator who should really accomplish the North-west Passage, and of £5,000 sterling to the first vessel which should actually reach and pass the North Pole. And, to hasten the search, the Prince Regent, in 1819, offered prizes from £5,000 to £15,000 to vessels that should advance to certain named points in the Arctic Sea.

The British government, in 1818, fitted out two North Pole expeditions. One of two vessels, under Capt. Buchan, was to penetrate between Spitzbergen and Nova Zembla, and by passing over the Pole come out at Behring's Straits—thus running around the north of Greenland and North America. The other expedition of two vessels, under Capt. Ross, was to attempt the passage through Baffin's Bay, to reach the Pole and thence turn west to Behring's Straits. Both failed wholly to reach open water. Buchan came home the same year, having discovered nothing. Ross very carefully observed the west coast of Greenland up to 77° 40', but failed to find the north passage, and returned, late in the year. But these small results did not discourage the Government. In 1819 it started out Capt. Parry, with two fine vessels. He followed in Ross's

track, but trending west struck what he called Barrow's Straits, leading west, and wintered in what he named Melville Island. The next season he cruised around, locating Banks' Land—up to this day the most westerly land yet discovered in the Arctic Sea. He reached home safely in 1820—having more interesting discoveries to report than any voyager who had penetrated the Northern Sea. He was awarded the Prince Regent's highest prize.

Thus encouraged, Parry started again, in 1821, with two admirably equipped vessels, provisioned for a four years' voyage, with orders to examine the north of North America. Entering Hudson's Bay, he ran into its north inlets. Repulse Bay permitted no passage west—hence its name. Then Parry sailed and explored along two hundred miles of coast to the north, but returned to Repulse Bay to winter, with several Esquimaux families near at hand for company. The next year (1822) he sailed north again, and spent all summer in tracing the islands, head-lands and waters of the Gulf of Boothia up to Melville Sound. The second winter was passed near his former quarters. The summer of 1823 was vainly passed in trying to reach the open waters to the north, and that fall he returned to England. He reported very fully on the fauna and flora of that region, and presented a large mass of astronomical, magnetic and geographical observations to the national archives, but the real object of the expedition was unaccomplished. The open Polar Sea was still a sealed mystery.

But the great land journey of Captain (afterward Sir John) Franklin was not the least memorable exploit of those years of active exertion. While Parry and Ross were cruising in the waters to the north of Davis Straits, Franklin was sent by the British Government to explore the north coast by land. He started from York on Hudson's Bay, early in September, 1819, for Fort Providence, on Great Slave Lake, and from there struck off into the wilderness, but was forced into winter quarters by the severity of the weather and the utterly impassable barriers of snow, which kept him weather-bound for ten months. In the summer of 1821 he reached the Coppermine river, and on the last of July, at its mouth, sailed along the coast in the canoes his carriers had borne along with them. But he was unable to pursue the dangerous journey with such means, and returned, reaching a station of the Hudson's Bay Company at Moose-deer Island, Dec. 17th, in a most exhausted condition. July 14th, 1822, he arrived again at York. This land journey, of over 5,500 miles, was one of the most extraordinary in all the records of northern exploration.

In May, 1824, a Government expedition, under Parry, again went out, with his two old vessels, but after a winter in Prince Regent's Bay the ships sailed southward, but the ice bergs caught both ships and they had a terrible tussle for life. Capt. Lyon's vessel, the Fury, was forced ashore and abandoned, and Parry's vessel, the Hecla, with both crews, worked its way out, and reached England in October.

Franklin, not intimidated by his sufferings in his first land journey, made another attempt to sail along the north coast in 1825, when, in company with Dr. Richardson, the naturalist, he reached the North Sea, near Garry Island; thence returned up the Mackenzie river, to his winter quarters on Great Bear Lake. In June, 1826, the two parties of Franklin and Richardson started north again. They separated, and by their united surveys succeeded in tracing the rock-bound coast of the Northern Ocean from the Coppermine to the Mackenzie. Both parties, after great exposure and fatigue, returned to Great Bear Lake, in safety, and thence home, to demonstrate the feasibility of a north passage along the coast, to Behring's Straits, during August, of each year.

But the North Pole was still the point of particular interest; and Parry, once more in the Hecla, started—this time for Spitzbergen. There he kept his vessel, while with reindeer sledges and boats he endeavored to reach the North Pole by journeying over the ice. He journeyed for thirty-five days northward through rain and sleet, and then found the ice so broken and drifting to the southward that he had to turn back, and after sixty-one days' absence, boarded his vessel again. It was a singular fact that Parry and Franklin both reached the Admiralty office, in London, on the same day, within one half-hour of each other—Sept. 29th, 1827.

The next voyage—a private adventure by Capt. Ross—was one of singular adventure, peril and suffering. In the spring of 1829, Ross started for the scene of Parry's discoveries to find a new passage by way of Prince Regent's Inlet. He left Greenland, where he had refitted, July 27th, and nothing more was heard of him until he and his men were picked up, in August, 1833, by the ship Isabella, at the entrance of Lancaster Sound.

Ross's story was painfully interesting and exciting. After leaving Greenland, the vessel sailed, with very little hindrance from ice, to the spot where the Fury had been beached, and where Parry had cached her stores. The stores were found in perfect condition, but every vestige of the vessel was gone; it had undoubtedly been ground into pieces by the bergs. Ross now started to hunt for the new passage, but in latitude 72° was met by the ice. He worked his way southward, following the west shore line, landing occasionally for observations, and to take formal possession of the land. The coast, with its rapid tides, floating ice and dangerous reefs, made the voyage one of exceeding peril. He passed, however, as far south as latitude 70°, in a direction nearly south of "Fury Point." Then there arose an impenetrable ice barrier, and the vessel was forced into winter quarters.

The winter proved very favorable, and "an interesting tribe of natives" was discovered, who had never before seen a European face. With these people the crew fraternized, and with their assistance Ross made many interesting expeditions and discoveries along the coast line—exploring nearly down to the point where Fish (or Back) river was supposed to enter the sea. Their vessel was, indeed, ice-bound in its winter bay. They waited until the autumn of 1830 for the ice to move, then began to cut the ship out, but had got along only four miles when winter caught them again.

It proved to be a winter of excessive rigor, but they survived it, still having their Indians for company. The next summer the ice held on. The cutting-out process was resorted to, once more, but only fourteen miles were accomplished, when winter compelled the vessel to go into harbor again (October, 1831). The cold was terrible, and their provisions were finally consumed, so that to abandon the vessel and reach the Fury's stores was their only salvation. The ship was abandoned in May, 1832, and early in July, after a tramp of three hundred miles, the stores were found. The Fury's small-boats were now put into requisition as the only method of escape. In September they succeeded in passing to Leopold's Island. A dreary sight met their vision. Lancaster Sound remained ice-bound; thus the whaling fleet,

which Ross expected to find there, could not advance further north than Admiralty Inlet.

It was with sinking heart the crew turned, and retraced their steps to the Fury's stores, and there, under canvas tents they lived all that fearful winter. Using their knowledge of Arctic life, they blocked the snow around their tents, and succeeded in living, but with exceeding suffering from want of clothing, bedding, and animal food. Not until August 14th, 1833, did the ice begin to move. Then the crew once more started for Leopold Island, and, to their great joy, beheld a vessel in the distance, trying to make the land. A strong gale, however, drove her up Lancaster Sound, and the men then headed for the entrance of the sound, where the whaler found them as she returned on her track.

That it was a joyful meeting we can well believe. Men wept like children. They had come back, as it were, from the dead. The ship proved to be the whaler Isabella, of Hull, which Ross himself had commanded in 1818, and on it he and his crew—less only five who had died—returned to England, reaching Hull, October 18th, 1833.

Ross had been considered lost, and a vessel commanded by the brave Captain Back, fitted out by subscription, had started for the search for the lost navigator, but, touching at Greenland, Back there learned of Ross's deliverance, and so was spared a fruitless search.

Ross's discoveries were very interesting and important. He solved the problem of no passage to the west from the south of the Boothia Gulf—he mapped the coast line along Boothia Land—he discovered the actual magnetic pole, and obtained numerous other geographical and scientific results, that afterward were to guide Sir John Franklin in his remarkable quest for the true North-west Passage.

The Hunted Bride:

OR,

WEDDED, BUT NOT WON.

BY CORINNE CUSHMAN,

AUTHOR OF "BLACK EYES AND BLUE," "BRAVE BARBARA," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

PLUTTERING TO THE FLAME.

THE bright leaves of autumn dropping, dropping to fade and mingle with the dull earth, were like the hopes of Margaret's life, dropping into decay. After Branthope's return to the city, a loneliness, an ennui, amounting almost to despair, took possession of her. She grew weary of tending the fretful old man, weary of remaining always at home, weary of Branthope Villa itself, and the landscape upon which she looked from her pleasant window. This was but natural. The house was so lonely and gloomy—no young people, no mother, sisters—no society but that of the staid housekeeper and the irritable invalid. Hitherto she had upheld the girl in the discharge of her duties; she waited upon her guardian cheerfully; and no spot could be gloomy where Branthope once been and was to come again. Now, all was changed. A gray monotony settled over all things. Branthope did not love her—was tired of her—probably would come no more to this place. Oh, how sick she felt of life and the world, often wishing that it were she who was doomed to be taken instead of old Uncle Peter. The cool fall weather agreed with Uncle Peter, who, though still confined to his room, required far less attention than formerly, passing much of his time in his arm-chair, looking over accounts, transacting such business as accumulated, and reading the newspapers of the day. This only gave Margaret the more leisure for indulging her melancholy.

On hazy Indian-summer afternoons she would climb to the tower, where, with her head dropped to the casement of the open window, her eyes would wander toward the south, where the city lay in which he dwelt, and her fingers would twine together in a fierce struggle to resist the inclination to fling herself to the ground, or to flee away and be seen no more. She envied the careless country-girls who went by in wagons, or on horseback, looking up with a respect amounting to awe at the spacious villa, and doubtless, in their turn envious of the beautiful and elegant young lady, sole heir to old Uncle Peter's property. She envied girls who had mothers, or sisters, or true lovers; she felt miserably desolate; and there, in the high tower, like Marianne in the Moated Grange, she sat,

"And rising, from her bosom drew
Old letters, breathing of her worth,
'For love,' they said, 'must needs be true
To what is loveliest upon earth.'
'An image seemed to pass the door,
To look at her with slight and say,
'But now thy beauty flows away,
To be alone forevermore.'
'Oh, cruel heart,' she changed her tone,
'And cruel love, whose end is scorn,
Is this the end, to be forgotten and scorned,
To live forgotten and die forlorn?'"

Yes, in the pride of her youth and beauty, as deserted, as "forlorn," as though she had not a charm to win her love and companionship! A dozen times a day, as the various trains whistled in, stopping at or passing the little station, her color would change, and she would catch her breath, only to remember how vain it was to expect him, and to grow more restless than before.

This restlessness deepened into a slow fever; any physician noting the unnatural look of her eye and the quickness of her pulse, would have said that something was wrong, and that she was in great danger of serious illness. The old doctor who attended her uncle did remark the excitement of her nervous system, which he attributed to over-exertion in her care of the invalid, strongly advising change of air and scene. She longed for it as the thirsty long for cool water; but her uncle did not favor the project, and there seemed no place to which she could go without escort. So the advice of the physician was slighted, and the fever of impatient desire of change burned in her veins.

Some time early in December, before the first snow fell, while the weather was still settled and bright, though cold, she received a letter from Branthope, the first since his visit made six weeks before. She had long ago decided that her love for him had turned to scorn—that it was a happy escape that she had not been permitted to marry a man whom she could not thoroughly respect, and upon whom she could not lean for support in every emergency; she had said to herself that he was egotistical, weak in his feelings as he was in his resolves, easily led astray, incapable of heroic self denial, or any great ambition or achievement—any, pleasant, self-indulgent, handsome person, whom she admired and despised in equal proportions.

She would candidly have affirmed that this was the state of her feeling toward Branthope; but when the letter came, the old thrill ran from her heart to her finger-ends, her cheeks

flushed, her hands trembled; she could not bring herself to break the seal in the presence of her uncle, but stole away, girl-fashion, to her chamber, that she might be alone while she read. She had no reason to expect the epistle contained anything but formal inquiries after the welfare of those at the villa—perhaps she expected nothing more; but the mere sight of the familiar handwriting set her pulses to fluttering. Glancing eagerly down the page, she read:

"Cousin Margaret:
'Since I cannot come to you why cannot you come to me? A simple question, requiring a simple answer. Don't think, now, that I am about to propose something preposterous or infeasible. I know that you are tired out with playing the part of sick nurse; also, that your wardrobe needs replenishing (this, of course—ladies' wardrobes are always in that condition); and I noticed, while at the Villa, that your dresses were getting out of date—a frightful state of affairs to the female appearance! and that a change could be nothing but beneficial. Therefore, I beg of you, sweet cousin, to treat that crabbled and miserable old guardian of yours to fill your pretty little portmanteau with the necessary funds, and allow you a few days in which to visit the city, do your shopping, brighten yourself up, etc. I promise to take good care of you, be very attentive, escort you to the opera of evenings, and even follow you about like a fashionable footman, while you do your shopping. There is no sin against the proprieties in this arrangement, as I can secure you a room in the highly respectable and fastidious house where I board, with the company of the landlady's daughter, if you wish. I can also secure the lady's own guardianship during your stay; she is delighted with the idea of having you come, and as it is known here that you are a *bona fide* cousin, it has been a matter of surprise that you have not heretofore visited the city. I have excused you on the plea of my uncle's illness; but now the ladies are all begging for you, all anxious to assist in showing you the lions, as well as the best places to make your feminine purchases. I have promised them that you will be here Saturday evening, and shall be at the depot at the arrival of the five o'clock train, to escort you to this house, where you will be warmly welcomed, (it being understood that you are a beauty and an heiress.)
'If Uncle Peter won't consent, come without his permission. You are not a baby, and have been tied up to his pedestal long enough. If he will not give you a handsome supply of funds, never mind; I can lend you. And believe me, I am dying to see you, and ask why you refused to say farewell when I was last at Branthope Villa. Some misunderstanding, I suppose, as usual. All will be explained when you come to see. Ever faithfully yours,
'BRANTHOPE."

Margaret instantly resolved to accept the invitation. She was in that state of unutterable weariness of mind and body when any change is welcome; she would go with or without her "father's" approbation; the life she was living was no longer endurable; after a brief experience in entirely different scenes, she might return more contented; at all events, she should go.

She received the letter on Thursday evening, so that she had only Friday in which to win her guardian's consent and to make preparations. She went first to the housekeeper, who advised her to go, by all means, and bring home all the pretty things and new fashions possible. "She didn't believe in cooping up young girls like chickens in winter; Margaret needed a change, and must have it—and who was more fit to take care of her, during her visit to the city, than her own cousin, to whom she was to be married, and who had lived in New York long enough to know just where she wanted to go and what she wanted to see?"

Emboldened by this support, Margaret sought Uncle Peter, who shook his head, and coughed, and declared she should not stir a step, unless she could find a more suitable chaperon than Branthope. "If the housekeeper would accompany his niece, and promise never to let eyes off her, she might go, and he wouldn't begrudge her sufficient money for her shopping."

But the housekeeper, unfortunately, was indispensable at home, during the absence of the young mistress, as Uncle Peter could not deny, seeing that himself required so many services.

Margaret laughed gayly at the idea of her needing some one to tend her, as if she were a baby learning to walk; Branthope would wait upon her where she required the attendance of a gentleman, and for the rest, she could take care of herself, with a little of her hostess's assistance.

"I shall go, father dear," she said, in a very determined way, and began her preparations the next morning, as if he had given his consent. That evening when she went to him he gave her two hundred dollars, warning her not to lose her purse, nor permit it to be stolen, nor to lend money to "his rascally nephew," and come home without having bought what she needed.

"I'd give you more, Margaret, but I know, if I do, you will allow him to coax it away from you, and he shan't have a red cent of mine, if I can help it."

Margaret was secretly afraid that if she had more money she should give it to her cousin; and as her own wants were modest, she was satisfied with the amount in her purse.

Saturday, at noon, in her neat travelling-dress and hat, she came to her guardian's room to kiss him good-by for a short week. As she pressed her lips to his wrinkled cheek, did no presentiment assure her that it was for the last time? No—or if such a shadow crossed her sunshine, she would not allow herself to feel its chill. She was in one of those imperious moods, which so well became her, during which she resolved and acted defiant of presentiment or the opinions of others. Her beautiful face sparkled with excitement; the expression of weariness was all gone, her light, tall figure lifted itself with inherent grace and spirit, every movement was full of animation—she was so lovely, so triumphant, that the old man sighed when the door closed upon her, as one sighs at the close of a strain of exquisite music. Closed, indeed, forever, to his ear! Lost, alas, forever, to his eye!

Branthope Maxwell waited impatiently the arrival of the expected train on that Saturday afternoon. Having received no answer to his letter, he was not certain of his cousin's acceptance; still, he knew her so well, had played so often upon her love for him, that he felt quite certain she would come.

The brightness of excitement was still upon her face when Margaret stepped from the cars and was led to the carriage which he had provided. Indifferent as he was to her charms; cruel as was the plan to which he had consented to insure her by the very instrumentalization of her faith in him, he could but realize how very graceful and lovely she was, and be proud of her, as he ushered her into the house, the lady of which immediately took her kindly in charge.

When the summons to tea came, Branthope paused at his cousin's door to conduct her down.

"Oh, Branthope," she whispered, as she came out, "I never thought of it before, but I suppose that disagreeable friend of yours stays here, does he not? That will be enough to spoil my visit."

"Rest easy, pretty one, then; he does board here; but is away on business. I believe he is not expected back until a fortnight hence. Was it not considerate in me to time your visit so opportunely? By the way, you refused him!" with one of his careless, airy laughs, as if it were merely a most amusing incident.

"Oh, Branthope," was all she could say; no place there to demand explanations, to utter reproaches.

"More of this, anon," he said, lightly, drawing her hand upon his arm and conducting her down the staircase.

There were not two opinions at the table as to the beauty of young Maxwell's cousin. He was something of a boaster, but it was evident that here he had not exaggerated. Margaret felt quite at her ease; and if not entirely happy, with one matter so little understood between herself and Branthope, she was in that eager mood of anticipation and present animation which looks very much like happiness. That evening they attended the opera. Her cousin had been so thoughtful as to provide her with a handsome white cloak, which she wore over a salmon-colored silk; gloves and bouquet were also in readiness, and the young provincial beauty was conscious of as much elegance as was displayed by any of the ladies surrounding her in the showy seats which had been secured.

Soon all her attention was riveted upon the stage. Herself a fine musician, with a splendid voice, the tragic part of her nature, which had slumbered, in her quiet country home, took fire, as she watched eagerly, with quickening breath, the powerful exhibition of ambition, jealousy and love, in the character of the heroine of the play. This was *life*, indeed! this was living to some purpose! She felt as if she could spring upon the stage, without study, without preparation, and there give voice and expression to those fierce passions and energies, even more fully than the successful *prima donna* was now doing.

New ideas and aspirations crowded her kindling brain. Many, attracted by her fresh beauty, watched her with only less interest than she watched the stage, smiling at her evident entire abandonment to the fascination of the play, while they admired her as something far more novel and interesting than the leading actress. To possess the inherited beauty of generations of refined blood—a beauty proud and delicate—yet with it the charming air of a country girl, intelligent and naïve, was to command a double gerund of admiration.

Margaret remained innocent of any consciousness of the sensation she created—her attention fixed upon the stage. She did not even feel, by magnetic attraction or repulsion, the steady gaze of a pair of keen black eyes, which looked at her from behind a pillar in the gallery. Had she met those eyes she would have recognized them at once, and been astonished to learn that that Mr. Martinique, if absent on business, could not be very far away. But he took care that she should have no opportunity of recognizing him.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN THE MESHES OF THE NET.

On the afternoon of Sabbath-day Branthope took his cousin out for a drive—along the palace-lined Fifth avenue, through what was then just beginning to be the Central Park, over the Bloomingdale road a few miles, and back. The air was only cold enough to be bracing; it accounted for the rich, red glow upon her cheek when she returned—the vivid light of her glancing smile, which won still more securely the hearts of her new friends; but as soon as tea was over she went to her room, there to reflect for a few moments in solitude upon the promise she had made during that short drive.

Every word spoken by her companion came back to her, sounding sweeter, more persuasive, as she recalled them:

"Darling Madge, I'm going to ask something very strange of you, and yet, to me, what seems very natural, under the circumstances. We have been engaged a long time; why not be married now, without any further waiting, any 'fuss' or preparation not really necessary? Your uncle will not allow me to come to his house, thus I am entirely banished from your society; but if you were my wife, you could come to see me whenever you could be spared from Branthope Villa. When Uncle Peter dies, you will have some one to depend upon who has the right to come forward and protect you. If we were to marry openly, you know he would be angry, and in a fit of malicious rage, will his property to some school or church, and we should both be left penniless; but, by a private marriage, we can each be made very happy, and no harm done. We are old enough to decide these matters for ourselves. If you will consent, Madge, we will have the ceremony performed this very evening."

He had pressed her hand—had bent and looked into her surprised and blushing face, and she had stammered:

"But I thought—I was certain—was told that you did not love me. Oh, Branthope! are you truly in earnest! and do you love me as you should to choose me for your wife? or is it, with you, only a marriage of convenience, for the sake of Uncle Peter's money?"

"Uncle Peter's money!" he had echoed, with a smile of contempt. "He hasn't enough, Madge, to tempt me to take a wife against my taste or inclination. Only tell me, sweet cousin, if you are willing. All shall be proper and decorous, though secret. I will take Miss Ella, our hostess's daughter, into our confidence; she shall accompany us to the church, both as witness and to give you courage, little one."

Then she had sat silent many minutes, and he had urged her to consent, with a hundred arguments—all of no real value; for the one argument which alone had force, and which finally prevailed over the dictates of fear and prudence, was her love for the one who persuaded her.

Now, as she sat in her chamber, she was like one in a happy dream, conscious of dreaming and expecting to awake. Was it wise in her to have consented to this secret and hasty marriage? But she had consented. Branthope was gone, at this moment, to seek Miss Ella, and obtain her promise to act as bridesmaid. After all, there could be nothing very imprudent about it.

Her guardian had once favored the match, and only forbade it now from the querulous obstinacy of a nervous invalid. Doubtless, in his heart, he desired and expected the union of his two wards, only he must fret about something, and so he fretted about poor Branthope. Branthope! he did love her, then, after all his silence and apparent indifference. Perhaps she had wounded his pride, and thus kept him from making any demonstration, while she had been grieving herself to death over his supposed carelessness of her feelings. Now, he really, ardently wished her to become his wife, so soon; ah! how strange it all grew, and how happy she was, with even while trembling, and essaying, in vain, with her cold, quivering fingers, to tie her hat-strings and draw on her gloves.

She had promised to be ready at eight o'clock. It was a quarter to that time now. Miss Ella knocked at her door, came in, kissed her, tied the rebellious bonnet-strings, fastened her shawl for her, laughed at her for

being so nervous; then Branthope himself stood at the door, waiting for her to come forth.

The look of love, of adoration, she gave him before he led her down the stairs, ought to have turned a worse man than this one from his purpose; but the selfishness of a frivolous, careless pleasure-seeker like young Maxwell is something more appalling than the set crimes of great villains. He thought not of the welfare of the girl who thus confided in him; he thought only of the results to himself of the deception he was about to practice.

"We are going to church, mother," said Miss Ella, pausing a moment at the parlor door; "we shall not be late."

There by the curbstone stood the close carriage in waiting. Branthope was never more gracefully easy and self-possessed than as he helped the ladies in, and chatted to them during the brief drive. He was almost too gay to satisfy Margaret, who felt the deep solemnity of the occasion overpowering even her joy. The carriage stopped in front of a large church, which loomed up dimly in the star-light. Margaret never learned the name of the church, nor on what street it stood, but it appeared to be somewhere in the suburbs, as there were vacant lots about it, and the gas-lights were few and far between.

"They do not have evening service here, but the pastor promised to be on hand; and a friend of mine, a gentleman, is to assist me in getting through with this dreadfully embarrassing matter," said Branthope, speaking quickly, as if, after all, he was more excited than he cared to show. Taking the cold hand of the confiding girl on his arm, he drew her forward into the dimly-lighted building; the sexton was there, and the pastor, as he had promised, was waiting, with a gentleman in a cloak standing near. There was only one lamp lighted near the altar; the place was cold; a tremor ran through the bride's frame, but too many conflicting emotions were throbbing at her heart to enable her to view calmly her surroundings. She did not have time to conjecture as to who her lover's friend might be; indeed, she did not throw back her gaze until she stood before the altar, and the clergyman began the solemn words of the marriage service. She did, indeed, notice—for she recalled it vividly afterward, that the pastor said, she following him, "I take thee, John," etc., instead of the more familiar Branthope—but as John was her cousin's first name, she recognized the appropriateness of its use at the instant.

How soon it was all over! the ring upon her finger, the benediction pronounced, and she, turning, agitated and trembling, to meet Branthope's eyes and smile.

"It is as well," he remarked, "since this is a quiet affair, to have it properly attested. Let us all sign our names to the church record."

The sexton brought the book, and the bride subscribed her name where she was told, never noticing, in her bewilderment, who signed first or last, and not yet having had a glimpse of Branthope's friend's face; she heard the clergyman expressing his thanks for the handsome *dowry* he had received; a gold piece glittered in the sexton's hand for his trouble in opening the church; then Branthope again gave her his arm, to which she now clung heavily, almost overpowered by the consciousness of the important step she had so hastily taken, and again they stood on the cold pavement beneath the silver glint of winter stars. There were now two carriages before the church.

"Good-by, for the present," said Miss Ella, kissing the bride, laughingly; "we will ride home by ourselves. I wish you both every imaginable joy!" and almost before she could collect her thoughts to wonder why they need drive back by themselves, the bridegroom had lifted her into his carriage, sprung in after her, gave the word to the driver, and they were being rapidly whisked along the noisy street.

Margaret was thankful that her husband did not soon break the silence. The events of the last few hours had culminated so rapidly that now she desired a few moments of rest. Silently he sat by her side, as if to allow her this needed rest. They two were alone in the world together. The darkness of night shut them in, save when, every other moment, the light of a street lamp flashed in and was gone; the driver in his seat outside, attended only to the order which had been given him, to drive as fast as the law allowed, to the place which had been designated to him.

Presently the man by her side took her hand and kissed the wedding-ring upon it.

"Sweet Margaret!"

She started, tore her hand wildly from him, and stared at him through the darkness, until passing the next lamp, its gleams rested for one brief instant full upon his face. Then the bride shrunk into the corner of the carriage, holding up both hands, and would have screamed, had not her voice failed her, her throat, dry as if filled with ashes, refusing to give forth a sound.

"What is it, my dear wife?" questioned the same calm, soft voice, whose first accent had thrilled her with dread and amazement.

"Your wife! your wife!" she gasped, at last.

"Where is Branthope?"

"Escorting your bridesmaid home, darling, without doubt."

"Mr. Martinique, let me out of this carriage."

"Mrs. Martinique, I have taken too much trouble to secure you, to let you go thus easily."

"I do not know what you mean. I don't care what you mean or say. I must get out. Driver, stop!" she cried, frantically.

But the loud wheels rattled over the stones, and the driver either did not hear or did not care to seem to.

"Sweet wife, it is too late to quarrel, now. What can't be cured must be endured. How much happier for you to be married to one who worships you, than to an indifferent scapegrace like your cousin. He never cared for you, while I—"

"I am not married to you! don't say it! We are married—Branthope and I—oh, where is he, that he does not come?"

"Here is the marriage certificate—can you read it by this uncertain light? Take it, and keep it carefully. Such documents are sometimes important."

She snatched it from his hand, and strained her eyes to read it in the varying light. Yes! there was the blazing fact—their names linked together in an eternal bond—Margaret Branthope Maxwell, and John Lopez Martinique.

"I cannot understand it!" she cried, in despair.

"It is very simple," he said, calmly as ever. "I took your cousin's place when we approached the altar, as we had previously arranged. The clergyman was not in our confidence. He was told that you expected to marry me, but that your friends objected on account of my being a foreigner. Being assured of my respectability, ability to support a wife, that I was at liberty to marry, etc., and seeing no

reason why we, who desired it, should not be united, he made no great objection to the privacy of the ceremony. Miss Ella was not in the plot, either; so that you cannot blame her. Your cousin did all the talking, I presume, when he announced the programme to her. He was to represent that you had come to New York on purpose to marry me, your uncle not being willing that you should wed a resident of another country, but that you were to affect an interest in him, the more perfectly to conceal your true purpose. Miss Ella doubtless thought that you acted admirably. We depended for the success of our plot, simply upon your excitement and embarrassment preventing your noticing, in the dim light, who stood beside you at the important moment."

"But why plot against me?" asked poor Margaret.

"Ay! there's the rub! I wanted you, sweet wife; wasn't that reason enough? I gave him a swinging *bonus*, over and above what he would have received had he married you. Firstly, I canceled all his obligations to me, which were not small; then I gave him funds on which to keep up appearances this winter, and lastly, I abandoned all your claims to the Maxwell estates, as I intend to take you far from this country, and to provide for you so generously that you will not require any of your uncle's property. It is your noble cousin's plan to visit Branthope Villa, and there represent to your distant relatives that you voluntarily abandoned him to follow my fortunes 'round the world. Of course he will again reverse the will, young Maxwell will have the property and the reputation of being his uncle's favorite, and can, doubtless, sooner or later, win the pretty young lady with whom he is at present infatuated."

Margaret moaned—a gasping, dry sound, which ought to have awakened pity in a cold. Perhaps it did move the heart of this curious man, who, professing to love her as he did, was willing to peril her happiness to secure himself a doubtful bliss; he attempted again to take her hand, saying, soothingly:

"Why regret that unworthy cousin? He had neither the taste nor the heart to appreciate you, while I have thought of nothing, dreamed of nothing, lived for nothing but you, since I first felt the faintest assurance that I should some time win you. I will be a good husband to you—will not demand nor expect too much from you, until you have time to adjust your feelings to your circumstances. For you to rebel against fate is vain. Submission and a degree of contentment will best secure your happiness."

"Where are we going?" she asked, as he paused.

"To the dock, where we will take a boat and be rowed to the ship's side, which to-morrow morning sets sail for South America."

Margaret leaned her head against the cushioned seat; her brain whirled for a few seconds; she thought herself about to faint, and only saved herself by the strength of a resolute will.

A bride! oh, miserable reality! A short time before she had stepped into that carriage, happy, blessed, her heart throbbing with the purest, warmest love for one whom she had chosen in her earliest girlhood—her first love, him to whom she had been so true and tender, even while having his faults of character cruelly revealed to her—her face rosy, her eyes lustrous with the tender glow of the marriage benediction.

Now she sat beside her husband, hand and heart turned into ice. This man, a stranger, with whom she had never conversed but twice—whose habits, business, nationality were unknown to her—a stranger, in every sense of the word, since there are those to whom we feel drawn at once as by ties of sympathy or kinship, while this person had ever been to her only repellent—this man, sitting there in the place of him for whom she had prepared her soul, shocked her into brief despair.

But the very shock aroused the strength of her will. He had proven the strength of his resolution in the boldness of the attempt, which, thus far, had so perfectly succeeded. Now the warfare was open. No longer the victim of intrigue, she comprehended her danger and confronted it. This man, legally, might be her husband. There was the document. Poor Margaret, only a child, really, and without experience, did not at that moment think of relief through legal channels, by avowing her marriage a fraud; all she thought of was present danger—all she resolved was that she would never be forced on board that vessel, to be taken from home and friends to some land of exile with this man. She would not submit to this cruel plot. She would escape, if only through death's door, which stood open to her in the chilly waters of that river which they were rapidly approaching.

She remained perfectly silent and motionless, fixed in a terrible resolution. This silence seemed to trouble her companion more than the wildest reproaches would have done. He began to talk to her soothingly, as he would to a frightened child, picturing to her the beautiful and happy life she should lead, in a tropical country, on one of his vast estates, where mountains of snow cast their cool shadows over a land stately with palms, gorgeous with flowers, pleasant with fruits—where the seas lapped upon the sand in softest music—where slaves should obey her slightest wish—and he, her lover—husband, should devote himself to her every caprice. The persuasive, passion-inspired promises fell upon her ears without meaning—they were filled with the ominous murmur of a rising tide, which was to drown out all the sweetness of her life. Yes! her bridal chamber should be the grave—and such a grave! The slimy, slippery under walls and umbers of those hideous piers, among which her body would wash to and fro, be bruised, and swollen, and blackened—oh, God! horrible—horrible! but not so horrible as that ship, bound southward, lying out there blackly upon the black river, awaiting the bridegroom and his bride.

The carriage stopped, the driver sprung down and opened the door; she leaned forward quickly, before Mr. Martinique could step out, and asked:

"Driver, will you not help me? have pity on a friendless girl?"

"I was told as it was all right, and I've a double-sledge here in my pocket, not to take no notice of your wimmin-nonsense," was the cool reply.

She said no more; but, as her companion assisted her to alight, she darted an eager glance about her. Only one lamp burned on the long wharf, and that was at some distance; it was Sabbath evening; not a policeman was in sight—no human being, save him by her side; the coachman now driving hurriedly off, and two sailors lounging in an open boat, which she dimly made out, as her husband dragged her to the edge of the dock, to be waiting alongside. Even in heaven there seemed no pity; the silver stars twinkled with a cold and distant brightness; her whole life rushed through

her mind; tears sprung to her eyes as she saw the image of Uncle Peter, turning his gaze to the door, in a vain expectation of seeing her enter, arise before her—Branthope, whom she so loved, and who had been so murderously cruel to her—

"Look alive there, men! and be very careful of the lady! Do not let go of her until I am in the boat," called Martinique, in a low, but sharp, authoritative voice.

Did he then suspect what was passing in her thoughts?

He lifted her, gently enough, and lowered her down into the strong arms which received her from below. The tide was rising, and the boat rocked and bumped against the timbers of the pier; the water moaned and groaned, as it rushed, white and seething, into every opening; the wind was beginning to rise, too, as it will on winter nights, and whistled dismally as it flew by.

"Steady, men, steady!" cried the firm voice of the gentleman, as he resigned his wife into their arms.

"Ay, ay, sir!" But it was not "ay, ay," Margaret, before the men could place her steadily on her feet, purposely set them on the edge of the boat, bore with her whole weight on that side, and making a sudden movement, as the sailors lost their balance, not only succeeded in throwing herself into the water, but in dragging one of the men overboard.

There was a great splashing in the dark river, loud and shocking oaths; but Margaret heard nothing, after the first moment, but a thunderous beating in her ears; the chilling, cramping water closed about her, and she went down, down, struggling and clutching at the treacherous element—down until the thunder melted into music, and her eyes closed over the fire which flashed and played about them, and she floated on clouds of elderdown.

CHAPTER IX.

THE PRICE OF BLOOD.

GREAT was the consternation of Branthope Maxwell, as he sat at his late breakfast, carelessly jesting with Miss Ella upon the "run-away match," with scarcely a shadow of remorse over his sunshine—certainly not enough to spoil his appetite, for the chicken fricassee had disappeared from his plate, and he was deep in his second cup of strong coffee—great was his consternation, we repeat, when a note was handed to him, marked "in haste," which he recognized as the handwriting of John Lopez Martinique, and tearing it open, he read:

"Come to the St. Nicholas at once. A terrible accident has happened. Say nothing to any one, but come quickly. I am half-mad. Lovez."

Branthope turned perfectly white as he read this scrawl.

"What has happened? Any one ill?" inquired Miss Ella, startled by the change in his countenance.

"A telegraph—my uncle—nothing serious, perhaps; let you know on my return," he replied, as he went hastily out. In the midst of his alarm and remorse, there came upon him the thought that there might be results of his late infamous transaction which would make it necessary, for his own good repute, to keep concealed.

Not knowing in what shape to look for the impending disaster, he reached the hotel in a state which would have been pitiable, had he been deservingly of pity, and on inquiring for Mr. Martinique was shown to the private parlor of that gentleman, whom he found pacing the floor, his hands locked behind him, his face almost as sallow and rigid as the dead, his eyes dull and shrunken, looking old and shockingly changed.

"Heaven and earth, Martinique, what is the matter?" His trembling lips could hardly frame the question, so powerful was the working of fear and conscience combined.

"Shut the door, Maxwell; lock it. She is dead."

"Dead?"

"Yes! you infernal villain, dead! She drowned herself. If it had not been for you, it would not have happened!"

Branthope sunk into a chair, trembling from head to foot. He was not so inhuman as to hear of his cousin's sudden and violent death without great distress of mind, enhanced by the knowledge that he was, in one sense, a murderer; but the words of his accuser stung him into a resistance which enabled him to bear the shock better than he would have done had he not been made angry.

After an absolute silence of several moments, he suppressed the trembling of his limbs, and asked, huskily:

"When, and how? You should have guarded against such accidents, Martinique. I warned you that she had a will of steel, did I not?"

"Yes! yes! I loved her the better for that. But, my God, I did not think that young creature had the courage to rush into such a death. I did order the men not to let go their hold of her. She purposely flung herself over, dragging one of the men with her. I was not in the boat, but I jumped into the water to endeavor to save her. I am not a very good swimmer; I should have lost my life had I not been assisted by the police, who came at our outcry. Yes, Heaven knows, I did all I could to rescue her; this more to himself than to his hearer, as if endeavoring to lessen the aching burden of remorse and guilt.

"What did the police think of the accident?" inquired Branthope, now, as ever, selfish, and shrinking from the dread of exposure of his own unmanly conduct, even while cold with the shock of her fate who had been so near to him so many years.

"They suspected nothing wrong. I explained to them that the lady was my wife, and that we were about to embark on the ship Golden Shore for South America. No one is in our secret but our two selves, Maxwell; there is nothing to be apprehended in that direction. Miss Ella, the minister who united us, all who hear of my sad affliction, will attribute it entirely to accident."

"The driver of the coach?"

"Ha! there may be something in that. She did appeal to him for aid, showing that she was being abducted. But no one will heed his story, when I have you and Miss Ella, and all the other parties, for witnesses that we were married, she of her own free will. The two sailors who were in the boat sailed this morning; they were in doubt, last night, whether or no the lady went overboard on purpose. I purchased their opinion that she did not. No one can doubt my grief who sees me. I loved that woman, Maxwell, as you know, and I hate you, who cowardly, betraying rascal, who brought her to such a fate."

Branthope smiled sardonically, through his ashen pallor.

"The less said about that the better," he sneered; then, as the reality of his cousin's loss forced itself upon him, he burst into tears.

"I thought she would be happier with you than me," he sobbed. "You were rich; you loved her better than I; poor Margaret! I believed she would get over her disappointment in a few days, and find a brilliant life before

her. I did, indeed. I never imagined she would be so desperate."

Martinique walked back and forth in a gloomy silence.

"Did they find the—the—body?" shuddered Branthope, after a time.

"No; but I have offered a reward for its recovery. If it is found, I shall take the body of my wife with me, and cause it to be buried on my estates. I shall take the next steamer for home. Whether I shall ever again come to this country, remains to be seen. As for you, after the search for her—her corpse—is over, I never wish to see your face again. You have all the reward I promised you; there is nothing now to prevent your standing first in your uncle's will. I hope you are satisfied."

Branthope remained silent under the reproaches of a man equally guilty with himself. The other rung the bell, and ordered a cup of strong coffee.

"We must go down there together," he said, "and my nerves are too unstrung to bear it. The coffee will tone me up."

When it was brought, he swallowed it, black and hot, pressed his hat down over his eyes, and went out with his companion, both so pale and haggard as to attract many inquisitive eyes as they entered a carriage and were driven off to the right, through a side-street, until they came to the river at one of the piers above Canal street, off which, in the river, the vessel had been anchored by Martinique's order.

With a strange feeling of mingled disappointment and relief, they heard that, as yet, there was no news. Mr. Martinique doubled his offers of reward for the recovery of the body of Mrs. Martinique.

There was no news that day, nor the next, nor the third—nor for a week; but on the morning preceding the noon on which the steamer, in which he had engaged passage, was to sail, Mr. Martinique was summoned to look upon an object, which lay at the nearest police-station from that pier, which the officers thought must be the body of his wife.

Together they looked, those two men! upon the appalling sight. That *might* be what was left of the beautiful Margaret. They could not be entirely certain. The fingers of the left hand, upon which the ring should have been—an emerald ring encircled by diamonds, which Mr. Martinique had taken from his own hand to place on that of his bride—were gnawed away by river vermin; but the hair, dripping and tangled, was long and black, and glossy, like *hers*, and the teeth were even and white, like those of a beautiful young girl; as to the rest, they could but shudder and turn away.

In light, the figure corresponded with Margaret's; so the two most interested testified before the coroner's jury that the body was that of Mrs. Martinique, and Mr. Martinique hastily paying his rewards, and leaving money with Branthope for the funeral expenses, hurried to the steamer, whose hour of departure drew nigh, obliged to abandon his intention of having his wife buried in his own country.

While the vessel was steaming out of the harbor, that afternoon, his eyes resting on the slopes of Greenwood inclining to the bay, might have seen, or imagined they saw, the hearse which rolled along the streets of that city of the dead, followed by a solitary mourner, too glad to hear the earth rattle upon the desolate coffin, and to shake off, as far as possible, with the dust of that grave, the sorrow and guilt of which he already felt too great a load for his gay and pleasure-loving temperament.

When Branthope Maxwell returned from that most miserable journey to Greenwood Cemetery he found letters from the Villa, of too urgent a character to be longer neglected. The old man was on the verge of being brought down on his bed to the city to learn what had become of Margaret, and why she did not return at the appointed time.

Miss Ella cried, and all the ladies and gentlemen of the house said how sad it was, and how shocking, when informed that the body of that beautiful young bride had been recovered, and immediately committed to the grave on account of its condition—that the innumerable husband was already on his way to the south, and that upon young Maxwell now devolved the painful duty of announcing the loss of his niece to Uncle Peter Maxwell.

It was a painful duty—one from which, as the hour of its performance drew nigh, Branthope would find have been excused. But even as the inexorable wheels bore him forward to the well-known little station, so fate bore him to the end of that which he had attempted.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 351.)

MOTHER-LOVE.

BY HARRIET ESTHER WARNER.

How true a love is the mother-love
That bestows on her baby grown;
The love that she gave to the nestling dove
Has not changed, though the birdling has flown.
But has only grown as the baby grew,
And strengthened as he grew strong;
And the mother-love will be ever true
To the child she has loved so long.

The dewy lips of the baby-boy,
And the bearded face of the man,
To the mother's heart bring the same sweet joy,
Nor changes in life a short span.
To the mother's heart he is always the same;
As her child he is ever near;
And whether his life be of honor or shame,
To her he is always dear.

Though her hair in youth was of purest gold,
And is frosted with silver now,
And her eyes have grown dim, and her body old,
And wrinkled the once smooth brow;
Yet the mother's love will stand the test,
Of the years as they swiftly fly;
Of all of earth's love 'tis the truest and best—
A love that will never die.

Aunt Betsey's Great Trouble

BY LUCILLE HOLLS.

"GEE! G'long there! Whoa!"

And, with a final flourish of his hickory good, Farmer Randall brought his yoke of oxen up beside the tidy wagon-shed. He put the rod in the cart and released the animals from their thrall, letting down a pair of bars between the yard and a field adjacent to it, through which they passed leisurely toward the richest grass and the brook-side. Then, having replaced the bars, he turned to the clear trough of water by the well and washed his brown face and powerful hands in the cool flood; thence, with them dripping with the crystal drops, went toward the great flat stone that formed the step to the kitchen door, over which hung a coarse roller-towel.

As the farmer stood there he glanced into the kitchen, that was scrupulously neat and clean as all the outer surroundings to the house, and where on old-fashioned cherry table, with coarse linen and common blue crockery, was laid for two. The kettle upon the stove bubbled a merry song, and the tea-pot upon the hearth sent out a fragrant, welcome steam; but the straight, severe-faced mistress, bustling to and fro from table to pantry, looked more ungracious than usual.

Not that the good man was accustomed to any very affectionate demonstrations from his wife. The neighbors said of her, that she was "a real smart, thrifty woman, and one that had been the makin' of Elisha Randall, who wa'n't any too given to savin'; but a powerful hard woman to git along with."

Still, Farmer Randall always maintained a cheery style of addressing her, and by his gentle, coaxing ways, seemed to indicate that he had kindness enough in his nature for them both. To-night he saw that something had crossed her; so, as soon as they were seated at supper, he asked, pleasantly:

"Well, Betsey, what's gone wrong to-day? Didn't the hens lay as many eggs as they had oughter, or has Jack Powell lowered his price for butter?" with a shrewd consciousness of the troubles most grievous to her soul.

Mrs. Randall gave her head a vicious upward toss, and vented, in terse sentences, her wrath.

"Matter? Your sister Esther's dead. She left a child, of course; and we've got to be saddled with it."

The farmer swallowed his mouthful of pink ham with a great gulp, and pushed away his smoking cup of tea.

"Poor Esther! Poor little Esther!" he said, softly, looking out of the open door, and brushing the back of his hand across his eyes, and thinking of the sister who, years before, had played with him upon the short, fine grass of this same old yard. "Well, Betsey, old girl," he added, coaxingly, but without looking toward her, as if ashamed to have her see the signs of his grief, "you know we hain't got any but ourselves to stint and store up for, and the poor little chick won't take much."

"She won't, eh? She's a gal, a gal grown. And comin' from the city it's most likely she'll have no end of highfalutin' notions. But, she'll soon find this is no place for the airin' of 'em. She must learn to work and earn her salt."

"To be sure, Betsey; to be sure. And no doubt you will find her a great help. The work of the farm comes pretty heavy on you now; we hain't neither on us as young as we was, you know, wife."

"Oh, I ain't one as is ashamed of my age, Elisha Randall! So you needn't be a-preachin' that at me; but I don't want any help, though I s'pose I've got to have it, want or no. Ef only it had been a boy we could have got some good out of him."

"Yes, that's so, old woman; but we'll try and make the best of it. When's the little thing a-comin'?"

"Little thing!" said Mrs. Betsey, contemptuously, quite unable to enter into the visions that filled her husband's mind. "Likely she'll be big enough when there's clothes to be made. She'll be here to-morrow noon. The letter's up on the clock-shelf."

The next morning the farmer harnessed up Major, the gray horse, to the box wagon, which was used on all state occasions, and drove off to the depot, which was several miles away; and had nearly an hour to wait before the train came buzzing up to the little station. The conductor swung off, and helped down a woman with a baby, and shouted "All aboard."

"Hold on," shouted Farmer Randall, "ain't there a little girl a-join' to git off her? She's my niece, Esther Stretton."

"No, sir," said the conductor, and the train swept on, leaving Esther's uncle more disappointed than one would have believed it possible for him to be, over the non-arrival of a little girl he had never seen. As he jogged homeward he wondered what had happened, and what Betsey would say. The latter speculation was set at rest soonest.

"Umph!" said that lady, who, much to her husband's surprise, awaited his coming, in a wrinkleless gown and apron, donned for the occasion. "Most too stuck-up to come to her country relations. You'd better eat your dinner before it's all spoiled."

And she went vigorously to scaring a stray fly out of her orderly room.

That same morning a slender slip of a girl, with eyes like the stillest sapphires, and a rasy-red mouth that would break into merry smiles upon the slightest provocation, and rebellious little curls, breaking away from her sunny braids and floating about her milky fair throat and temples, looked bewilderedly under the city terminus of a certain railroad route. This was Esther Stretton. Her trunk was somewhere in the big baggage-room, marked for St. James, and she had her ticket in her pocket book. By-and-by a great iron door swung open, and a man sung out:

"Here you are! Passengers for Rockaway, Glen Cove, and Port Jefferson branches, and intermediate stations; show your tickets!"

Esther pulled out her passport bill, held it up to the man, and pushed through with the crowd. And then all went well for a little time; traveling was a novelty to the girl, and the country and the day were lovely. But when the conductor hurried by, looking hastily at all the tickets, he started her with:

"You're in the wrong car, Miss; take the fifth one ahead."

"The fifth one ahead!" thought Esther, in dismay; but she gathered up her parcels and satchel, and bravely started on her long journey through the train. Before she had gone far she commenced to feel sick and frightened at crossing so many platforms, and got so mixed up as to the number of cars she had passed through, that she was positive she was all right when she seated herself in the fourth one. It seemed a long time before she was asked to show her ticket again; then it was by a strange conductor, a tall, jolly-looking young man, with black mustache and merry eye.

"St. James! Whew!" he said, when he looked at Esther's ticket. "Why, you should have taken the car ahead. This train goes to Locust Valley."

"Oh, dear! What shall I do?" asked Esther, raising her beautiful eyes with a look of such distress, that it went straight to the depths of Conductor Mark Wilkinson's kind heart.

"Don't be frightened. We'll fix it all right, somehow," he said, cheerily, and went his way. Presently he came back, and sat down beside Esther, and talked to her as kindly and easily as if he had known her always. "You'll have to go on my train to Locust Valley, now; and you'll have about two hours to wait there. If you are hungry, and don't mind a little walk, I will take you up to the farmhouse where I board, to get some dinner. Then I'll bring you back to Mineola, and you will have to wait there three hours and a half. It's too bad. You'll be homesome, won't you?"

"Oh! I don't mind that; but when will I ever get to St. James?"

"Not until 7:34," said Conductor Wilkinson, looking at a large time-table he carried in his coat pocket. "You will leave Mineola at 5:55. I'll see that you get fixed safely. Are your folks expecting you?" And—was so very cheerful and kind—he soon heard Esther's history, and how she was going to stay with her relations whom she had never seen for when-ever he had to get off at the stations, he came back and sat down beside her, as though he had a perfect right there.

When Conductor Wilkinson left his pretty passenger at Mineola, that afternoon, they were mutually sorry to part. But a surprise was in store for Esther, when the 5.55 train stopped beside the platform. A tall form in blue uniform piloted her to the car and Conductor Wilkinson arranged a seat for her, saying:

"I've got a little business down at Port Jefferson"—without feeling a twinge of conscience for the falsehood—"so I'm going down on this train, to-night, while Billy Dennis runs mine for me."

"Oh, I'm so glad!" said Esther, with bright eyes, but blushing a trifle at her admission.

It was half-past seven of the rosy night when Mark Wilkinson helped Esther down at St. James' station, and gave her hand a hearty squeeze at parting, and whispered an assurance that he hoped she'd "find the folks real pleasant," and that he meant to come and see how she liked it there, before long. For a few minutes the little beauty in the blue robes felt desolate enough; but then a kind-faced old man drove up to the platform, and she was joyfully welcomed by uncle Elisha. Her trunk, which by some carelessness had not arrived until the same train, was put in the wagon, and off they went in the sweet twilight; Esther soon feeling at home with her uncle, though she had some dread of meeting her aunt, who, the farmer kindly told her, she mustn't mind. "She's real good sort, of you only rub her the right way."

Mrs. Randall's reception of her orphan niece was not entirely ungracious; but when Esther went early to her room, feeling sorry home-sick, she pursued up her lips and waited for her better-half to open the conversation in which she intended to express her views of the young lady.

"She's a right nice little 'un, isn't she, Betsey?" said uncle Elisha, coaxingly. "A deal like her mother, only more pork lookin'."

"Perk! Yes, I guess so. But she'll find she isn't goin' to keep up any of her city fashions here, I kin soon tell her. It'll cost enough to give her calico gowns."

"Well, well!" The farmer had accidentally pulled from his pocket a letter. "Ef I didn't forget all about this letter she gave me," and he proceeded to read it, while Mrs. Randall cleared the late tea-table.

"Betsey! Betsey!" he called, excitedly, in a few minutes; and as his wife appeared, he looked at her curiously, as he added, "What do you think? Esther's worth ten thousand dollars! This is a letter from her guardian. And she's only come to stay till we git tired of her, because her mother's will was to have her see the old homestead, and learn to know her uncle Elisha!"

"Umph!" said aunt Betsey, rather crestfallen; but in no other way than a difference of manner toward Esther did she ever acknowledge her defeated position.

And when Mark Wilkinson, late in the fall—having paid several flying visits to the Randall Farm, and gained Esther's consent to overlook the fact that he had once loved and lost, and take him for her husband—relieved aunt Betsey entirely of her trouble, that lady, as well as kind uncle Elisha, was really sorry to have the sweet maiden go. As for Esther, she assured them, again and again, that she was glad she ever came to St. James; adding—to Mark—

"You know why."

TWO KISSES.

BY MARO O. ROLFE.

The moon was shining softly, the fields were decked in green,
The wind through the trembling branches sung a vesper sweet and low,
And with dear Ivy Landon, my heart's own royal queen,
I wandered out beside the brooklet, with its calm, unrippling flow,
Across the stretch of meadow, to the elm-tree gray and bare—
And stooping, I plucked a violet from the grassy, verdant glow,
And, with a kiss upon her forehead, I twined it in her hair.

The sun was shining coldly, the fields were wrapped in white,
The wind through the shivering branches moaned a requiem sad and drear;
And I wandered lonely, sadly, when I went with her that night,
To a lone grave 'neath the elm-tree, grim sentinel gray and sear—
And I went to know that Ivy, my bride, was sleeping there;
But I joyed while I mourned her deeply, that God, who held her dear,
Had kissed her on her forehead, and twined his jewels in her hair.

Rifle and Tomahawk:
OR,
NED WYLDE, THE BOY SCOUT.

A Romance of the Sioux War.

BY "TEXAS JACK."
(A. B. OMBUDRO.)

CHAPTER XVI.
MONTANA MIKE ASTONISHED.

ONE, two, three! and the three pursuers of Montana Mike bit the dust, brought down by the unnerving fire of Ned Wyld.

"Now, sir, I think we had better leave here—there's a hiding-place above that a snake can't find," and the boy turned coolly to his companion, who with a great effort, got to his feet.

Leading the way up the steep ascent, the boy soon stopped by a large tree that grew to a great height and overhung a rocky cliff above.

"Now, this is not a very hard tree to climb, and it leads to a safe place. I would have been there now, only I didn't wish to leave my own good pony; but I come here in case I should get into trouble, for I was in these hills hunting, a year ago, as guide to a party of gentlemen from the city, and I found out this retreat then."

"You are a brave boy. You have saved my life," at last Mike found breath enough to say.

"We won't talk of that, now. Are you able to climb this tree?"

"Yes; but have we left no trail?"

"None since we left the prairie. A hound couldn't track us here."

Into the branches the two then clambered from the rocks, and at a height of thirty feet from the foot of the giant monarch of the forest.

Slowly up the trunk they went, from limb to limb, until they came to where a huge branch overhung the rocky summit of a jutting spur of the mountain.

Out upon this they went, and let themselves down upon a kind of shelf, overhung by a sheer precipice behind them, protected by boulders upon each side, and open toward the prairie.

The only means of access was by way of the

tree, and a safer, better place could not have been found.

"I followed a bear up here last year; and I got him, too; see, here is water, and these rocks form a kind of a cave," and Ned pointed to a trickling rivulet that fell over the precipice, and then threw his roll of blankets under the sheltering cliff.

"There, lie down and rest yourself, and you will soon be all right."

Montana Mike obeyed; the boy was the master of the man then.

Explanations then followed between the two. Montana Mike's story was soon told; all that he cared to have the man know, the boy then made known. He had come into these parts in search of one whom he was determined to find.

That very night he had found him, and—had lost him.

But he would not despair; his life would be devoted to the duty, for duty it was to more than one.

Then the two went peacefully to sleep, and the sun was far across the heavens when they awoke.

Well prepared with provisions, and with plenty of good water near, the two fared most comfortably, little troubled by the hands of prowling Indians they saw going hither and thither, or their wild war-cries when they discovered their three dead comrades, slain by Ned Wyld.

Thus another night and day passed, the Indians searching the gorges and hills for them, but without success, and both Montana Mike and Ned Wyld were perfectly satisfied that their retreat could not be discovered.

"To-morrow I will be able to travel—I will be myself again, thanks to you," said Mike, as the two sat together in the moonlight, the third night of their stay on the rocky shelf.

"Well, we can then slip away from here and go and join Crook, who is marching toward the Rosebud. When he strikes these villages the war will end, and then I can continue my hunt without danger of being constantly hunted."

"You must be pretty determined to find your man, to risk your life up here."

"I am; but is not that an object moving yonder, far out on the prairie?"

Mike glanced in the direction indicated, and after a while answered: "Your eyes are better than mine; if you see anything."

"I see it now distinctly; it is either a horse or a buffalo coming this way; it is too large for a deer."

"Yes, I see it, now; it is a horse, and he has no rider. Now will be our chance if he comes this way."

The boy continued to watch the approaching object with the greatest interest.

Nearer and nearer it came, until the moonlight plainly discovered it to be a horse walking slowly toward the hills.

"There is no man upon him. I'll go down and catch him, if I can—hat see over his back! a man walking behind him; I saw him raise his head."

"You are right boy; he is approaching these hills cautiously, and for fear of a shot, is keeping behind his steed."

With increased interest the two men gazed upon the approaching animal, which soon was almost at the base of the hills.

Here the horse halted, and above his back was visible a head, surmounted by a broad sombrero.

"It is a white man, that's certain," said Mike, and as he spoke, apparently satisfied with his observation, the man came round to the side of the steed and sprang into the saddle.

"Hullo! what! why, what the deuce ails the boy?" exclaimed Montana Mike, as Ned Wyld suddenly sprang to his feet, throw his rifle-strap over his back, and the next moment was rapidly descending the tree.

To the call of Mike the boy made no answer—perhaps he did not hear.

Then he disappeared, and a few moments of suspense followed, when a dark form dashed out into the moonlight from the base of the hills.

Still, like a statue, sat the horseman in his saddle, his eyes turned searchingly upon the tree-bordered hill.

Suddenly his gaze caught the form bounding from the shadow, and like thought he wheeled to dash away.

"Hart Moline! Hart Moline! for God's sake, hold!" came the ringing tones of the boy; but unheeding, the man sped on; the rifle leaped to the shoulder of Ned Wyld, and a sharp report followed.

High in air bounded the splendid steed ridden by the man, but he did not go down, and if hit hard, still had struggled to continue his flight.

As if determined to kill, the boy sent shot after shot in pursuit of the flying horseman, who, apparently unhurt, still pressed on.

Then, in seeming despair, the brave boy broke down, and leaning his head upon his rifle, he burst into a flood of tears, his bitter sobbings heard distinctly by Montana Mike upon the cliff.

A clatter of hoofs suddenly aroused the boy. They were near at hand; and once more himself, he wheeled quickly to meet an expected foe.

But no; the moonlight shone upon a superb black steed and a splendid looking rider.

It was Fearless Frank, the scout, who had suddenly appeared upon the scene, coming from around the base of the hill, and sweeping on like the wind.

Seemingly unmindful of the presence of the boy, he spurred on hot on the trail of Hart Moline, and as fast as he could run, Ned Wyld rushed on in chase, and five minutes after the three were lost to the gaze of Montana Mike, who, with surprise, had watched the strange scene occurring upon the prairie.

CHAPTER XVII.
TRAILING A RENEGADE.

WHEN Fearless Frank left the camp of General Crook, he felt that he had a dangerous duty before him, for he was determined to again hold converse with the Rose of the Rosebud, and none knew the danger attending such a determination better than himself.

Having been turned aside from his former scout to the prairie encampment of Sitting Bull, by the discovery of the buried woman in the thicket, he shaped his course again in that direction, and approached it with the greatest caution, in the early evening ere the moon had arisen.

Halting for a rest for his steed, after crossing the river, he sought a place of concealment for Whirlwind, and then cautiously crept in the direction of the Indian village.

At length he left the shelter of the river bank, and was creeping through an open piece of timber, when the noise of hoofs caused him to quickly draw himself up into the branches of a tree near at hand.

A moment after a score of warriors came along, and halted beneath the shadow of the very tree that concealed the scout.

Why they had stopped there, the scout could not tell, and for a moment believed that their quick eyes had fallen upon his trail.

No; they were not looking but listening.

Then the ears of the scout caught the clatter of hoofs; a horse was approaching over the prairie, and coming at a rapid gallop.

This sound was what had caused the Indians to halt.

Each warrior then, at a motion of one who seemed to be the chief, took shelter behind the trunk of some convenient tree, and he who had seemed the leader remained beneath the large willow that concealed the scout.

Brightly through an opening in the branches the moonlight fell upon the warrior, and every nerve in the frame of the scout trembled as he beheld, almost in reach of his hand, the dark, stern, daring face and athletic form of Sitting Bull, who little dreamed that a deadly enemy was near, contemplating the chances of escape should he kill him where he sat upon his pretty, spotted pony.

Nearer and nearer came the hoof-strokes, and then their rapid beat changed to a slower gait as the timber was reached.

A moment after the dark form of a horse and rider came in sight.

"My God! it is a white man! In Heaven's name how can I warn him of danger?" muttered Fearless Frank, and he brought his rifle round for ready use.

Suddenly the horseman drew rein; his searching eyes had detected the half-concealed forms of the warriors behind the tree-trunks.

"Let not my red brothers dread evil. I am the friend of their people," cried the horseman, in the Sioux tongue.

"The pale-face is no friend to the red-man; his people are now on the trail of my warriors," replied the deep, stern voice of Sitting Bull, who yet kept his position behind the tree.

The pale-faces have driven me from their villages; they hunt me, as does the red-man the buffalo, and I am come to live in the tepees of my Sioux brothers.

"I would show them how to strike to the heart of the pale-face, and lead their belts with scalp; will my red brothers trust me now?"

"I am no coyote in their village."

"The pale-face has spoken well, if his tongue is not crooked; let him come here and look in the eyes of Sitting Bull."

"Sitting Bull! It is you whom I seek, chief. I have news for you—news that will make your red heart glad, and redder your hands still more with the crimson blood of the pale-faces," said the horseman, in a voice of savage joy, as he rode forward and confronted Sitting Bull.

"My white brother speaks well. I have seen him in the towns of his people; I have seen him among the tepees of my tribe, when the hatchet was buried."

"He has a keen eye, and his hand is red with the blood of his own people; he is welcome," and Sitting Bull held forth his hand, which the horseman firmly grasped.

"God in heaven! it is Hart Moline," and the scout buried his head upon his hands.

And thus he remained, seemingly unmindful of all that the white man told the red, and which made him a traitor to his own people.

"The pale-face is the brother of Sitting Bull; he shall be a great chief."

"Let him now go to the village of the Crazy Horse. It is beyond the prairie in the mountains. Let him tell the Crazy Horse all that his tongue has said to the Sitting Bull, and the Medicine Queen of the Sioux will make him a warrior of my people. The Sitting Bull has spoken."

"I will do as the Sitting Bull directs. The daughter of the Medicine Queen, the Rose of the Rosebud, is known to me. Only three suns ago I would have met the Rose to give to her one whose eyes were as bright as her own—one whom I intended should become the squaw of some Sioux brave; but the Rose was not there to meet me."

"The Rose of the Rosebud clings close to the Medicine Queen; my pale-face brother will see her in the village on the mountains."

"My red brother has spoken well," replied Hart Moline, and a moment after he was riding in the direction of the mountains, while Sitting Bull and his warriors continued on in the direction they had been going when the clatter of hoofs had brought them to a halt.

The scout awaited until the coast was clear, and then hastily descending from his place of concealment, he walked rapidly back to the spot where he had left his steed, mounted quickly, and, having struck the trail of Hart Moline, started off in rapid pursuit.

With a swinging pace Whirlwind pressed on, until he came in sight of the horse and rider in his front, just as Ned Wyld opened upon him with his rifle without apparent effect.

Determined to overtake the renegade, Fearless Frank pushed on in chase, almost unmindful of the presence of the boy; his game was before him, and he would run it to the death.

CHAPTER XVIII.
NED WYLDE'S DISCOVERY.

ON, on, like the wind, swept the steed of Hart Moline, and behind him came his determined pursuer, his matchless steed gaining on the one in his front at every bound.

Behind them, on foot, ran Ned Wyld, exerting every energy to prevent being left out of sight.

For some distance the mad race continued, and then Hart Moline looked back with a triumphant glance. A heavily-wooded gorge was just in front of him.

But, as he triumphed, there came a flash, a whirling sound, and a stinging sensation under his right shoulder-blade.

"Good God! I am hard hit," he cried, as he reeled in the saddle, and, with terrible energy, he spurred forward and disappeared in the gloom of the gorge.

A few moments passed, and Whirlwind bore his master into the canyon with the speed of an arrow.

Up the gulch he rode like the wind, and then suddenly drew rein; before him was the object of his search.

Hart Moline lay at the base of the hill, plainly visible in the moonlight, and from his clenched teeth oozed both blood and foam.

Over him bent a slender, graceful form—that of the Rose of the Rosebud.

A few paces distant Swift, unmindful of his master's suffering, and a slight wound in his leg, from which the blood trickled slowly, was feeding upon the luxurious grass.

As the scout rode up, the Rose of the Rosebud turned toward him, and said, softly:

"The pale-face is welcome—his brother is sorely wounded."

"He is no brother; he is a traitor to his people; his heart was black, and my rifle sought his life; but he is not yet dead, and there is danger here. Will the Rose let me bear the pale-face into her cave?"

"Come," was the simple response, and raising Hart Moline in his strong arms, the scout bore him in behind the waterfall and laid him

upon a buffalo-robe near the tepee of the Medicine Queen.

Then he returned and quickly led in his own steed and that of the renegade, the Rose guiding him through the cavern.

As he disappeared behind the waterfall, a dark form appeared upon the outer scene.

It was Ned Wyld, breathless and eager.

At first he seemed as though about to dash on into the cavern behind the cataract, but, as though suddenly changing his mind, he crept in to the shadow of a clump of cedars and sat down to rest.

A few moments sufficed to get back his breath, after his hard run, and then he began to reconnoiter.

Having marked the spot where he had seen the scout and the horses disappear, he glided into the mass of falling spray and found himself beneath a heavy shelf of the cliff, while before him yawned a huge cavern.

"I guess this will keep—I'll go back and get Montana Mike, and together we'll solve this mystery."

"Anyhow, I have found out one thing; this is the secret retreat of Hart Moline, and I believe he is in league with the red-skins."

So saying, the boy retraced his way, and gliding down the gorge, he suddenly stopped, with an expression of delight upon his face.

"Who can this belong to? Hart Moline's, as I live," and he turned the rifle he had found over and over again, examining it closely.

"Yes, here is his name; I remember the rifle well; but how did he come to drop it?"

"Well, I'll solve all this when I get back. In the mean time it will serve Mike a good turn."

Retracing his steps as he had come, in half an hour he was in front of the hillside, and a low whistle received an answer from above on the rocks.

"Come down and bring the traps with you. I have business for both of us," called the boy, and in ten minutes more Montana Mike stood by his side.

"First, here is a gun I will lend you. It is loaded, and will shoot sixteen times."

"And the owner—? you killed him?"

"No, he escaped me; but I made a discovery, and returned for you."

"I am ready; what did you discover?"

"A cave, where, if I am not mistaken, I will find the one I have long sought—ha! yonder is a horseman," and with the word, both the boy and the man sprang in close to the rocks, where they were out of the moonlight.

The person discerned was mounted on an Indian pony, and was coming directly toward them.

As he drew nearer, Montana Mike could scarcely suppress a yell of delight, for he recognized the well-known form of Old Solitary.

Presently the horseman drew within a few paces of them, and Mike called out:

"Injun!"

Instantly, Old Solitary threw himself on the other side of his horse, and brought his rifle to bear in the direction of the voice.

The next moment he called out:

"That's a damned lie. No Injun is fool enough to advertise himself that a-way, an' lookee here, Montana Mike, you is jist the rooster I is a-lookin' for."

"And I am glad you have found me, Solitary, for of all men I wanted to see you are the one. I didn't scare you much, then?" and Mike wrung his friend's hands.

"Yes, I'm allers skeer in these parts, an' I'm jist gittin' better, thank ye, from a skeer I hev bin had on me since ther night you went over the cliff so slick. How is yer, pard?"

"Safe and sound now, Sol; but I owe my life to this young fellow, who is as good grit as any man I ever met."

"He looks like a bantam as had spurs an' a'd crow. Glad ter make yer 'quintance, small feller! How's all ter him with yer? Old Solitary held forth his hand.

"I have no home now, sir," sadly said Ned, while a tear glittered in the moonlight, as it rolled down his cheek.

"Poor young feller! Well, I ain't got no home nuther, other then hereabouts; but I seed you afore, youngster."

"When, sir?"

"This blessed night. Yer see, I've bin prizer ter the reds, until a purty gal tuk a shine ter my old carcass, and let me out inter ther woods, an' gin me my shootin'-irons and a pony ter boot. Wall, she'd jist turned me out to graze on my own hook, when a feller came a-ter'm' up the gorge like mad, an' I made tracks fer ther bushes on ther hillside."

"Wall, a minnit arter, along comed another fellow, one who is jist the boss in these parts, an' he disappeared 'round ther bend in ther gorge; then I seed myself a-comin' on ther trail, an' shortly arter yer tuk the back track, an' I 'cludud yer'd foun' suthin' yer didn't relish up ther, so I dug out myself, as this ain't bin a healthy kentry for me, you bet."

In a few words Ned Wyld explained that the leading horseman was one he was in search of, and told of his discovery of the cave, and that he saw the second horseman go in there with the two steeds.

"Now I know ther place, purty well, an' ef yer say the word, feller, we'll go an' snoot out what ar' goin' on ther, that place ar' the home o' the Medicine Queen o' the Sioux; so here goes."

As Montana Mike was still a little stiff from his fall, Old Solitary let him mount his pony, and the three set out together to solve the mystery of the secret cavern—the home of the Medicine Queen of the Sioux.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 318.)

A Hawk-eye Hunter.

IN OIL COOMES' several fine stories of Western life boys and young men are represented as heroes of the trail and Indian fight. Some good people, who know very little of true border life, doubtless think these young heroes are impossible characters; but the author knows well of what he writes, and often meets with quite young men who have great reputations as skilled hunters, rangers and Indian-fighters.

We have before us the true story of the hunter-guide and bold fighter, Carper—a kind of Boone, Carson and Dick Daring all in one, whose life is wilder than any romance Oil Coomes ever wrote. An Iowa paper relates something of Carper's history as gathered from his own lips, and we quote what it records to show our readers what some of the boys of the border really are. The paper says:

"Mr. Carper is at present about twenty-four years of age. When a mere boy he was passionately fond of thrilling stories of the hunt and battle, of blood and carnage, the awful realities of war, and so inflamed did his imagination become that he determined to strike out and make for himself a name and notoriety among the pioneer trappers and hunters of the great West. Accordingly when but ten years old he left his home clandestinely and succeeded in reaching the hunting-grounds of the West, where he was engaged in hunting with such men as Kit Carson, Buffalo Bill and others.

When nearly twenty years of age, he was captured by a tribe of Sioux Indians, who proceeded to practice upon his person the most exquisite torture which their devilish ingenuity could invent. Every knuckle upon his hands was split open with a knife, his wrists were badly mangled, as were his knees, torture he bore up like a man, and to this fact he undoubtedly owes his life. His captors, apparently influenced by the courage and nerve he displayed, nursed him up like a man, and to this fact he adopted him as a member of the tribe. Two years elapsed from the time of his capture before he was able to effect his escape. Once freed from bondage he turned upon the race which had enslaved him, and from that day to this the red-man has been his foe. One year ago last spring Mr. Carper headed the expedition which opened up the mail route running westward from Fort Laramie 180 miles, through a country infested with hostile Indians, and full of danger for the civilized pale-face. For some time Mr. Carper continued to carry the mails over this route. He was compelled to keep a sharp look-out for the red-skins, and often served as a target for their firearms. But he escaped with remarkable luck, until one day, on his return trip to the fort, when he was set upon by a party of thirty-five Indians mounted upon their ponies. Five or six bullets took effect on his person from the first attack, but none of the wounds greatly distressed him. Then he started his horses into a dead run in the direction of the fort, and, dropping into the bottom of the wagon, with his back against the dashboard, he rested his eighteen-shooter across the back of the seat, and as the whole pack of screaming red devils came dashing after him, continued to fire in rapid succession, picking off the leaders first. When the last cartridge in his rifle was gone he had recourse to his revolver, and thus kept up the fight until within a short distance of the fort, when the reds slunk away, leaving eighteen of their number dead and dying along the road. When the fort was reached he was more dead than alive. Nine bullets had pierced his person—four of the number passing entirely through portions of his body—but luckily, and it would seem providentially, none had touched a vital part. The light had been a desperate one, and Mr. Carper's recovery was desperate. His mother, who is a resident of Jasper county, was notified of her son's danger, and immediately started for the scene. Under her careful nursing he slowly recovered, and at her urgent request returned with her to her home in this State. He bears upon his person the marks of many bullet wounds and the scars made by his torturers. He announces his determination of returning to his old haunts in the fall, if he has sufficiently recovered from the effects of his wounds. He counts the number of his Indian victims, and his scalp has raised, at 183, but as he is yet young, he expects to be able to greatly increase the number before his own top-knot is allowed to grace the wigwag of some dusky brave.

In person Mr. Carper is of about medium height, with muscles closely knit and firm, and eyes ever moving about with quick, suspicious glances—even and bright as a hawk's.

The buffalo hunt of the Grand Duke Alexis, the subject of so frequent mention by the press of the country at the time, is described in a humorous manner by Mr. Carper, who was one of the attending hunters. He declares that the Grand Duke never shot but one buffalo in his life, and brought into camp expressly for the royal sport. The animal was shot by the duke about seven o'clock in the evening, after which his royal ribs ran his scimiter into the carcass, and the action was immediately taken up and heralded as a wonderful and daring exploit. So much for republican simplicity."

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DECEMBER.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

Fatal month, that lovest to see
Beautiful things perish,
Thou art the last month in the year
That I'd ever cherish!

We must sit around our hearths
After daily labors
Piling coals upon the fire—
And on heads of neighbors.

The sun to warmer climes retires,
And the skies grow colder;
And, December, to the earth
Thou givest the cold shoulder.

Light of other days is gone
That once shone so gladly;
And in going up the street
Down we go quite sadly.

Cold the Boreal wind sweeps down
From the Arctic climes;
And it blows the heat away—
While it blows our noses.

Dark and dim the window-pane,
For the frost-flowers prank it;
And the nights are cold and blank,
And we want more blanket.

There's the hungry at the door
Knocking for a pittance;
Of your flour give him a sack,
And old socks for mittens.

Dying year stands shivering
O'er nature's waning fire;
And the flame is very low—
Overcoats are lighter.

Round the house the chill wind blows,
Vesper hour and matin,
And through yonder pane it steals—
I must stuff a bit in.

Featherly flakes how light they fall!
Quick and ever quicker,
Covering the walks and ways—
Where's a little sugar?

Disappointment only comes
To the spirit's hunger;
Last year's overcoats are short—
This year's dresses are longer.

Dead are all the tender hopes
Flower-time created;
Dark seems all the future sky—
Summer clothes have faded.

Oh, December, dark and drear,
Thy reign little please!
Iceicles hang from the eaves—
Also from the—the trees.

Adrift on the Prairie ;

OR,

THE ADVENTURES OF FOUR YOUNG NIMRODS.

BY OLL COOMES.

AUTHOR OF "DAKOTA DAN," "IDAHO TOM,"
"HAPPY HARRY," ETC., ETC.V.—GEORGE'S GUN DON'T WORK—OFF FOR
SWAN LAKE.

It was decided, before retiring that night, that we all make a general raid upon the deer-range the following day, and so cleaned up our guns and got everything in readiness for an early start. George went so far as to load his gun that night, that he might be on time the following morning. He felt that over his success in hunting, and vowed his intention of showing Jim how to take in deer the next day.

Finally we retired, and being quite exhausted over our day's exercise, we soon fell asleep. During the night I awoke, and rising to a sitting posture, I raised the cover of the wagon in which I was sleeping, and looked out. The moon was shining, and close by in its light I saw, to my surprise, my friend Kemply, in a deshabille, with a gun by his side and a ramrod in his hand, going through the motions of loading the weapon. My first thoughts were that he was laboring under a spell of somnambulism, and so I resolved to keep still and watch him. If he started off, then I would awake him. But after he had gone through the motion of loading his gun for the hundredth time or more, he put the gun away and returned to his couch under the wagon. I was puzzled by his strange, silent movement but said nothing to him about it; nor did I tell the boys.

The night passed away, and by sunrise the next morning we were off for the deer-range. After a day's hunting we returned to camp. All were in the best of spirits but George. He had had the chance of several shots that day at deer, but he had been unable to get his gun off. He had primed it a score of times; the caps would burst, but no discharge would follow. He knew he had loaded his gun the evening before as carefully as he ever did in his life.

"Draw your loads, why don't you?" asked Jim.

"I would have done so, had I possessed a wad-screw when in the field; now I shall proceed to investigate the cause of my bad luck today."

Attaching a screw to his ramrod, he inserted it into his gun. To his surprise the rod did not descend over half the length of the barrel ere it struck some obstruction.

"By St. Peter, the charge is blown half out, anyhow," George remarked, twisting the screw into the top wad and drawing it out. Then he turned the gun up, expecting the shot to run out, but he was disappointed.

"I surely didn't put two wads on the shot," he said, inserting the rod again, and drawing out a second wad sure enough. But still the shot refused to quit the barrel. A third wad—a fourth, fifth, and so on up to fifty, were withdrawn ere he had cleared one barrel, and found that there was not a grain of powder nor a shot in either barrel.

George was completely astonished, but when he caught sight of Jim's face, the whole truth flashed through his brain in an instant—Jim had been tampering with his gun.

To me the mystery of Jim's movements on the previous night was now satisfactorily explained. It was then, at the dead hour of night, that the spirit of mischief took possession of him, and he arose and proceeded to put George's gun in the useless condition he now found it, knowing full well that George's inexperience in handling a gun would not detect the trick very soon.

"Kemply, you confounded villain," the youth exclaimed, "you have been tampering with my—"

The rest of the sentence was drowned in the roar of laughter that pealed from Jim's lips.

"Never mind, my gay young cavalier. I'll see to your case before this matter is forgotten," King finally remarked.

The next minute the massive tread of a footstep sounded near, and Uncle Lige Farmer made his appearance in camp.

"Evening, boys," he said, in his jolly, bluff way of speaking; "what luck to-day?"

"Good, with but one exception," replied Jim, stealing a sly glance at George.

"Wal, it's been a spunkin' good day for huntin'," said Uncle Lige, seating himself before our evening camp-fire. "There's been gobs of deer cavortin' round back there for some time; but the best pickin' I know of, boys, is over atwixt the Purgatory and Hell."

* These names were applied to two terrible sloughs situated some ten or fifteen miles west of Sac City, and were held in almost as much dread by travelers as the places to which the names properly belonged.

"Where?" exclaimed Bob, his big eyes opening to their fullest extent.

"Back here, 'bout twenty miles north. That's two sloughs there—one called Purgatory and 'other'n Hell Slough, and I tell you they're swamper, boys. There's been more solid swearin' done up there than any place this side of the sulphur pit! Why, you can actly smell brimstone round there, the place's so nigh related to the bottomless pit itself."

"What gave them those scorching old names?" asked George.

"A party of emigrants came down that way a few years ago, and arter paddlin' through one slough, they went on and stuck in 'other'n. They war tellin' it arterward, and says one, 'arter pluggin' and wallerin' through Purgatory, we went on and mired down in Hell,' and ever since that time them sloughs have been known by them names."

"Well," said George, with affected seriousness, "after findin' out what you have been guilty of, Jim, I am inclined to think you are getting pretty close to where you're wanted."

"I'm not alone, thank fortune, exclaimed Kemply.

"Boys, how long do you propose to tarry here?" asked Uncle Lige.

"We would like to leave immediately, if we could obtain your services as guide to Swan Lake," I answered.

"I'm your persimmons, boys—just as lief spend a week or two with you youngsters as not. That's a lot of friendly Musquakie Ingins camped up there, and so that'll be a chance for some royal fun. I'll hitch up Buck and Bright and haul my canoe up to the lake, so's you can rove the water over and over, to your heart's delight."

"All right," we responded, with eager delight, "let us be up and off by sunrise."

"That's it, boys, if you want to make a good day of it; so I'll hie me to the house, snatch off a bit of sleep, and be ready for the trip," and Uncle Lige rose and took his departure.

We at once retired to rest, and were soon fast asleep, our minds filled with bright visions, the offerings of our most ardent anticipations of the morrow.

The night passed quietly away and with the first streaks of dawn we were up and ready to depart for Swan Lake. Uncle Lige soon came rattling down with his prancing oxen to a low-wheeled wagon, upon which he placed the canoe and outfit. Then, with gun in hand, he mounted into the canoe, swung his whip through the air with a hissing crack, and rolled away toward the north. We followed, close behind, in our own conveyance.

Our course lay over an undulating prairie, whose limits were the blue horizon. We plunged through Indian creek, at the risk of drowning our animals, and crossing the low bottom beyond, we began the gradual ascent of a long inclination, terminating in an immense track of rolling table lands.

As we toiled slowly up the hill, through the deep, brown grass, our guide stopped his team, and pointing to a large mound covered with reeds, he said:

"Boys, out yander, where ye see 'em weeds, are one of the natural curiosities of this prairie. It's a gushin' mineral spring with trampin' across to see. You can't drive to it, for the ground is soft and spongy around it. It'll be as much as you can do to 'proach it on foot. If ye go, look out for deer; they kind o' hanker 'round' thar."

We left our team in Uncle Lige's care and started to the spring. Before we reached it, we found deer tracks on the prairie, pointing toward the mound, whither the animals had been attracted by the saline elements of the water. As we ascended the mound we found Uncle Lige's words were true. The earth was soft and spongy and covered over with a thin turf, that trembled and quivered under our weight, threatening to break through and engulf us at every step. Here and there were dark, dismal holes, and gaping cracks in the earth, resembling the pits and fissures around a volcanic crater. We found the spring on the summit of the mound. The water was gushing out slowly, and passing off along a little channel it had worn through the crust, or surface. We drank of it through a hollow reed that served as a kind of filter. It was cold and clear, but strongly impregnated with minerals.

Having fully explored the mound, we returned to the wagons and resumed our journey up the slope. We finally reached the most prominent point on the eminence above, from which a grand and imposing scene was unfolded to our enraptured gaze.

The Wrong Man.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

ALICE AYLMER certainly looked very pretty, and very girlish, as she stood in Squire Homer's office, with her cheeks flushing eagerly, and her brown eyes wearing a look of repressed excitement, as she answered question after question, put to her by the five members of the village school commission.

"You really pass a very good examination, Miss Aylmer—very good. So far as I can see, you are qualified for the position of teaching in the school."

Old Squire Homer polished his glasses with his silk handkerchief, as he took a kindly, critical survey of her, and then turned to Mr. Jonathan Edwards.

"What do you think about it?"

Mr. Edwards puckered up his hollow forehead.

"Well, I haven't the least fault to find with this young woman. As you say, she has passed her examination creditably, but whether or not she isn't too young to manage those big boys, is what I am thinking about."

Alice's heart felt like suddenly sinking to the heels of her trim No. 2 boots—suppose they shouldn't give her the situation after all!

"I was thinking of it, myself," Squire Homer went on, thoughtfully, and Alice made a little desperate vow that they should give it to her. "I was thinking myself, perhaps Miss Aylmer would not know how to manage those big boys; do you think you could, Miss Aylmer?"

Alice drew her lissome figure proudly up, and her shiny brown eyes looked calmly in the old gentleman's face.

"I'm not in the least afraid of big boys, Squire Homer."

"But they're quite young men—Bob White is twenty, I am sure."

"I'm not at all afraid of young men, either, sir. They are more easily managed than old men she wanted to say, but added demurely, instead—"than young women."

There was just the faintest twinkle of humor in old Mr. Edwards' eyes as he peered through his glasses.

"I'll tell you what we will do; we'll consider it, Miss Aylmer. There is a young man who would like the position and I will cordially

say I would like to see our schools under a gentleman's charge. I would like the committee to see Mr. Osmond, and afterward decide. On Wednesday, at four o'clock, we would like to see you both here, for the final decision. Remember, Miss Aylmer, at four o'clock, on Wednesday—not a minute later."

And Alice had to go away content with only this, as the reward of her eager anticipations.

"It's too bad; it's just as mean as mean can be! The idea of a man trying to run a woman out of a position! I would crush that fellow Osmond to death if I had him here! Oh, how I do hate him! And he *shan't* have the school!"

Some such thoughts were coursing wildly through Alice's head as she walked rapidly home through the early October dusk, rustling her skirts through the piles of fallen leaves that had been showering down in russet somberness.

And her cheeks were flushed, and her eyes glowing with a sense of just indignation, that because she was so unfortunate as to be only a woman, she was to be outstripped in the race between her and this fancifully-named young fellow.

"But I *won't* be outstripped! I am as capable and competent as he, and I verily believe if it were reduced to a question of brains, I'd outlive him. As it is, Mr. Osmond—oh! how I hate that name!—this Mr. Osmond shall find himself outgeneraled by a girl's wit. He *shan't* have the school!" And Alice opened the door of the sitting-room at home with an energy that could only be expressed in manuscript by putting three heavy lines under the word—flung open the door, in her impetuous, charming way, to see a good-looking, gentlemanly fellow, sitting very much at his ease in the big green leather reclining-chair, and her mother quite delighted and excited as she came fluttering toward Alice.

"Oh, Allie, here you are! You don't know how long, we've been waiting for you. This is Romyn Osmond, Alice, a distant relation of mine. Mr. Osmond, this is my daughter Alice I was speaking about."

Romyn Osmond! Romyn Osmond, of all living men!—the fellow she already so cordially hated!—the less-than-man who was so promptly on the ground to get the position she so wanted and needed! And Alice's saucy little mouth curled as she looked curiously at him.

"Oh! Mr. Osmond—why, mamma, I had no idea you had any relation by that name. Isn't it a sudden discovery?"

For all the intended efforts to crush him with her withering sarcasms, Alice could not but help think, as she took a furtive inventory of him, that he was a really splendid young fellow, with the most effective blue eyes, and a blonde mustache that was enchantingly lovely. If only he had not been after the school!

"It was rather a sudden discovery, Allie, I think, but Mr. Osmond has explained that his stepmother's second cousin was an aunt by marriage to your poor dear father's cousin John."

Alice looked at him a moment.

"Oh! indeed! I am surprised. I never heard of it before!"

And the intonation of her voice was indescribable.

Mr. Osmond took it very pleasantly, however, and so completely ignored all Alice's silly little sarcasms that the girl could hardly keep from flying at him.

"I'll never tell him he is to be on hand at four o'clock to-morrow to enter his application! Let him find out the best way he can!"

That evening Mr. Osmond persisted in making himself very agreeable; he was a grand, good conversationalist, and could sing very creditably in a mellow, expressive tenor voice, and accompany himself on the little old-fashioned melodeon. He chatted pleasantly with Mrs. Aylmer, made a staunch friend of twelve-year-old Bob, and was so apparently oblivious of Alice's frigidity that he almost succeeded in making her fly away with herself, instead of sitting there sewing and listening, and, in spite of herself, admiring him.

The next day he came down from the one village inn where he had stayed the night, despite Mrs. Aylmer's cordial efforts to keep him, and half an hour after he came, Alice discovered she had some errands to do, and went off, looking very charming in her brown cashmere street-suit, with the knot of cardinal ribbon in her jaunty little hat, and with a calm frigidity of manner that was in amusingly vivid contrast to her glowing eyes and flushed cheeks, and that was in almost startling contrast to the smiles and graciousness she brought back with her at dinner-time.

"I've had such a delightfully busy morning," she said, as they sat at table, and Mr. Osmond watched her dimples and her pretty, tender ways, and thought what a lovely little witch this distant cousin of his was. "I hope you managed to get along without me, Mr. Osmond."

"It was quite difficult work, I assure you, Miss Alice. I had hoped you would remain with us this morning, for I shall be absent myself this afternoon."

Alice's eyes sparkled, but she veiled them demurely.

"I am real sorry I have had no opportunity to entertain you. If you have an engagement for this afternoon let me do what I can in the hospitable line before you go out. Shall I take you in charge until—what hour is your appointment?"

Her eyes were full of gay curiosity to know if he had really discovered the hour of the committee meeting, but their excited sparkle in no way abated when she found he had discovered, somehow.

"I shall be only too happy to be taken in charge until quarter of four, Miss Alice. I already anticipate a most delightful time."

Mrs. Aylmer looked placidly on, and listened, then spoke:

"I really can't see what you'll do with him, Allie. To be sure there's the Museum to visit, and you might call on Bertha May."

Alice handed Mr. Osmond his dish of rice-pudding.

"Yes, the Museum and Bertha May—and you forget Bob's aquarium in the attic and my birds and pressed flowers."

Was she joking him? Romyn Osmond looked at her laughing eyes, and decided it made no difference whether she was or not.

"We'd better leave the Museum and the call on Bertha until later, so that Mr. Osmond can leave me on Bertha. If Bob will get me the key to his den in the attic I will show the aquarium to Mr. Osmond now."

She looked up at the tall clock in the corner, that pointed to two o'clock.

"We haven't so very much time to spare, after all, Mr. Osmond. Suppose we go now? Come, Bob, lead the way."

They went up to the big, cheerful attic, single file, Bob leading the way with quick strides, Mr. Romyn Osmond following contentedly,

and Alice bringing up the rear with a curious smile around her mouth, and a sparkle in her brown eyes.

Bob's aquarium was worth seeing, for all it consisted of only a series of dilapidated glass dishes, for the water was pearly pure, and the fishes in good condition, and the different varieties of air-plants that hung about in wide-mouthed vinegar bottles as luxuriant and graceful as though grown in the conservatory of a palace.

It really did Bob credit, and Mr. Osmond was not slow to accord it, and became genuinely interested and delighted in the ugly crawfish, and darting tiny bass, and lazy snails, and the water-plants, and the shells with which Bob had beautified.

A church clock somewhere near boomed out three o'clock almost before Mr. Osmond, at least, dreamed that an hour had gone; Alice grew more merry and fascinating, and Bob more good-natured, and Mr. Osmond really thought the aquarium had proved a grand success.

Suddenly Alice spoke to Bob, as she stood looking out of the window.

"There comes Bertha May now, Bob! Run down and let her in. Bring her up here!"

Of course Bob rushed off, and Alice kept her post at the window, watching Mr. Osmond as he watched the motions of a hermit crab in a big nicked glass bowl—a sparkle in her eyes, that deepened as she went carelessly toward the door.

Mr. Osmond, I expect Bob has made some blunder or other down-stairs. If you will excuse me, I will run down and see."

And Mr. Osmond, deeply engrossed for the time, answered certainly, and heard Alice hurry off, close the door sharply, and go down the steps.

But he did not know that at the bottom of the flight she stopped to shake her little fist savagely, and to jingle in her pocket the key of the attic room, with which she had locked Mr. Osmond in.

"Now we'll see who gets the appointment at four o'clock, Mr. Romyn Osmond! Squire Homer is the soul of promptness, and old Mr. Edwards would almost behold a man who dared keep him waiting a minute, much less not give him a position—the position I want, Mr. Osmond—the position you won't get because you're my prisoner."

Downstairs she met Bob.

"It wasn't Bert May at all, Allie Aylmer!"

"Oh, wasn't it! It looked like her. Here, Bob, you mustn't go up-stairs now. Mr. Osmond particularly wishes to be alone a while—when I come home we'll both go up."

And with a quick, excited step, Alice started off to Squire Homer's office, to find the committee in solemn convocation, and a tall, pallid, spectacled, stoop-shouldered man among them, whom Mr. Edwards introduced briefly.

"Miss Aylmer, good-afternoon. This is Mr. Cyrus Osmond, from Bayridge, to whom we have decided to give the school for one term at least. Not out of any disrespect to you, but because we think a man can manage the big boys best."

Cyrus Osmond! A queer feeling of mingled bewilderment and disappointment, anger and mortification, seized her. This the successful Mr. Osmond, and she—great heavens, she had looked up that other splendid fellow in the attic, when he was the wrong man!

The hot tears came springing to her bonny eyes, but she jerked down her veil and managed to say something passable, and then got herself home, almost crazy with the shame that awaited her—for she never dreamed of doing anything but telling the honest truth.

So, with her sweet face subdued and flushed with shame, Alice went bravely home, and straight up to the attic, and unlocked the door, and came face to face with Romyn Osmond, who had been in durance vile over an hour, and who wondered what the dickens was up.

He laughed as Alice came in, but the laugh died away before her face, her words.

"Oh, Mr. Osmond, will you ever, *ever* forgive me, or do anything but justly despise me for what I have done?"

And then she told him all about it, and Mr. Osmond assured her he was very, very glad it had happened, because he should not forgive her except on certain conditions, which he would tell her later.

And "later" he did tell her—a couple of months later, in a letter from his Western home, in which he asked her to accept the condition of his forgiveness, which was—to give him herself.

And Alice knew then it had been a good thing that ever Romyn Osmond came her way; and she knew that the other Osmond was welcome to the school forever, for there was never more aught for her but love, and ease, and Romyn, her lover-husband.

Morning Calls:

OR,

NOT TRUSTING TO APPEARANCES.

BY MATTIE DYER BRITTS.

"WELL, the formalities are duly dispensed with, and I find myself invested with the property of my late respected uncle, all regular! And now, if I choose, I can set up an establishment, and keep it up in good style. But I never fancied a bachelor's hall, and where is the pretty Beatrice to make me a Benedict?"

So ran George Herbert's soliloquy, as he walked home from his office one evening, soon after he had become "the heir of his uncle."

"I declare," he continued, as he settled into a solitary corner in a half-empty street car, "I would marry at once if I could find a genuine girl. But, how can a fellow trust these be-flounced and be-flummeled doll-babes whom he never sees any other way? If I could only catch some of them out of 'company fix' and know just what they are at home—wonder if I couldn't? I believe I have a plan for it! I'll think a night on it, and who knows what may happen?"

What did happen was that Mr. George set out at a very unfashionable hour next morning to call upon some of his lady friends. It was so early an hour that he knew they would not be expecting him, or ready to receive him, and that was just what he wanted.

His first call was upon Miss Lulu Granger, where only the night before he had spent so delightful an evening, admiring Miss Lulu's faultless toilet, and soft, sweet voice until a late hour.

A servant who was sweeping the front steps told him Miss Granger was in, and as the door stood open George stepped unceremoniously in, too, and walked into the front parlor. The heavy curtains were down, making the elegant room somewhat dark, but the back parlor was wide open, and George saw a vision!

Miss Lulu, her hair twisted upon the top of her head in a little jug about the size and shape of a peeled onion, her fair forehead

adorned (!) with several little paper horns, her pretty person arrayed in a soiled, frayed wrapper, without belt or collar, and her pretty feet in slippers decidedly shocking, was tossing over some shining silks, in consultation with a plain little body whom George guessed at once to be her dressmaker.

Their backs were partly toward him, so they did not see him, and, quickly turning, George beat a hasty retreat, saying to himself as he ran down the steps:

"The Fates forefend! If I had to live with a sloven I should run away! Farewell, Miss Lulu! I'll go to Belle Dorsey's."

At Miss Dorsey's the door was ajar, but George was about ringing the bell when the sound of voices within arrested him. It was Belle herself, vociferously scolding a little sister, and George heard the sound of a smart slap, followed by a child's sobbing, and the words, in Belle's own tone:

"There, you meddlesome little brat, take that! I'll teach you to let my things alone, if I break your miserable little neck for it!"

George did not ring, but beat a retreat even quicker than he had from Miss Granger's, saying to himself:

"Cupid save us! A scold is worse than a sloven! I should take to drink if I had to live with her! I believe I'll try Miss Baldwin next."

Just as he reached Miss Baldwin's door her little seven-year-old brother came bounding out, ready for school, and George asked him if his sister Josie was in.

"I reckon you're Jose's feller, ain't you?" said Young America. "Lord, yes, she's in! She's 'n bed, and will be these five hours! Jose never gets up till dinner-time. Mother scolds her for layin' abed to read them nasty French books o' hers, but 'twon't do no good! Maybe, though, if I tell her you're here, she'll get up. Shall I?"

"No, I'll call again. You needn't say I was here, and there's a dime to buy some candy with."

And as George walked away he burst into a laugh, saying:

"Bless me, but this gets interesting! Three angels tumbled to clay in one morning, and it not half-gone either! Farewell, Miss Lulu! Good-by, Miss Belle! Pleasant dreams, Miss Josie! Now I'll make one more call on Nettie Hayes, and if she turns out a fright or a fury, or a lazy lounge, I'll go home and be an old bachelor to the end of my days! So hear me, oh, ye gods and little fishes—Cupid and Hymen into th' bargain!"

With which ferocious oath George bent his steps to the Hayes mansion, and rung the bell. He rung twice, but no answer came, and then he knocked, still without success.

"Nobody at home," was his verdict at last, and he turned to go, when the notes of a song floated to his ear. He paused to listen. 'Twas the voice of Nettie Hayes, for he had heard her sing the same song often, and it seemed to come from the back of the house.

"I'm determined to see her!" quoth Mr. George. With valiant ardor he followed the sound around the house, till it led him to a long, latticed porch behind the house. He stepped up the steps, and behold, Nettie Hayes, in a calico dress and a white apron, her pretty hair falling in a simple, close net, her sleeves pinned back from her pretty, round arms, her soft hands flying busily, and her sweet voice singing merrily, over a huge ironing-table, with a well-filled clothes-basket beside her!

"Good-morning, Miss Nettie," said George, close beside her, too, with his hat lifted.

Nettie started, and nearly dropped her iron. "Why, Mr. Herbert, did you drop from the clouds?" she asked, blushing and smiling, in pretty confusion.

"No, I came the legitimate way, by the front door, but neither ring nor knock could rouse you, so I took the liberty of coming round."

"Eh, I forgot to leave the hall door open so I could hear the bell," said